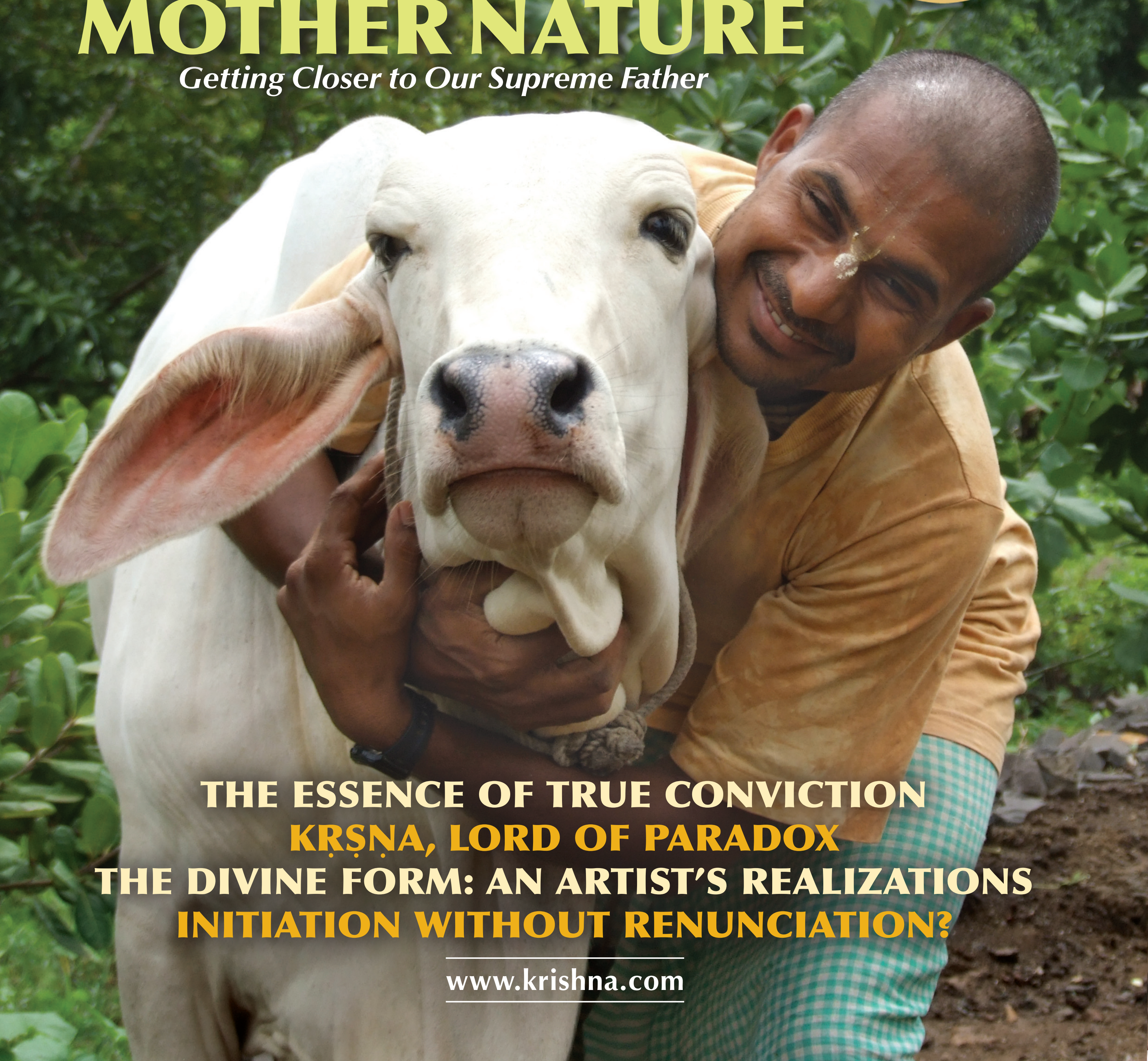
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the Hare Krishna Movement • May/Jun 2010 • $4.50

IN THE LAP OF MOTHER NATURE

Getting Closer to Our Supreme Father



THE ESSENCE OF TRUE CONVICTION

KṚṢṆA, LORD OF PARADOX

THE DIVINE FORM: AN ARTIST’S REALIZATIONS

INITIATION WITHOUT RENUNCIATION?

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BACK to GODH

Founded 1944 • Vol. 44, No. 3 • May / June 2010

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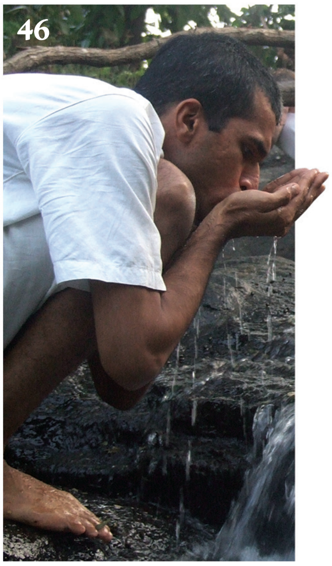
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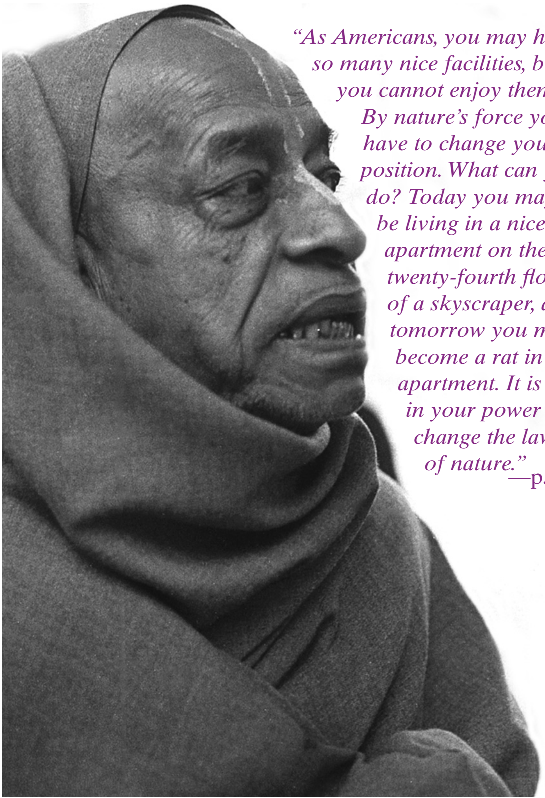
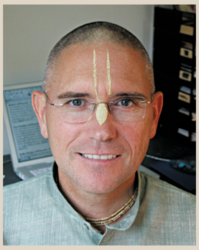
COVER Veṇudhārī Dāsa, one of the managers of a Hare Kṛṣṇa farm in Maharashtra, India, shows his affection for a cow named Shyamali. Please see the article on spiritual lessons from Mother Nature beginning on page 46. (Photo by Vaṁśī Vihārī Dāsa.)



"As Americans, you may have so many nice facilities, but you cannot enjoy them. By nature's force you have to change your position. What can you do? Today you may be living in a nice apartment on the twenty-fourth floor of a skyscraper, and tomorrow you may become a rat in that apartment. It is not in your power to change the laws of nature." —p. 44

WELCOME



IN THE Founder's Lecture starting this issue, Śrīla Prabhupāda lays out the high qualification required to attain *bhakti,* pure love for God: One must give up all desire for material enjoyment. For most of us, that sounds like a tall order. In "Māyā's Friend Norm," Padmā Devī Dāsī explains that we react that way because Lord Kṛṣṇa's material energy, Māyā, covers our spiritual vision, deluding us spiritual beings into thinking we belong in the material world. The quest for material enjoyment becomes our goal in life.

To overcome this delusion, we require Lord Kṛṣṇa's help. In "Conviction," Ravīndra Svarūpa Dāsa contends that the soul's connection with the Supersoul, a form of Kṛṣṇa within everyone's heart, is what inspires faith in the reality of God and spiritual existence.

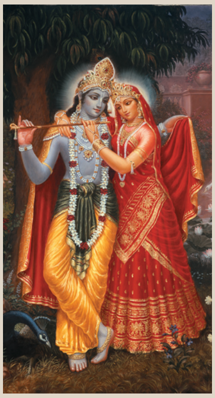
Spiritual conviction is also nurtured by contact with God's pure devotees and their instructions. In the Vaiṣṇava tradition, to which the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement belongs, a person serious about spiritual progress receives initiation (*dīkṣā*) from a guru, accepts the guru's discipline, and learns spiritual truth from him.

"In the Lap of Mother Nature" shows how a grand-disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda looked at nature in the light of Prabhupāda's instructions and gained increased conviction about the truth of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

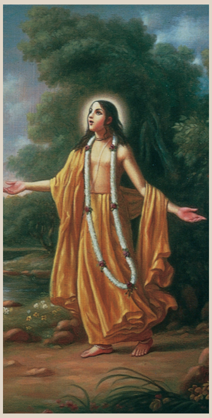
Hare Kṛṣṇa.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor*

OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.



Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are together the one Supreme Absolute Truth.



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined incarnation of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, inaugurated the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa five hundred years ago.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement

FOUNDER (under the direction of His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda) **His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda**

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Letters

Relishable Reading

I just finished reading the article "A Successful Quest," by Daiviśakti Devī Dāsī, in the March/April issue and wanted to tell you how much it touched my heart. I especially liked how she found the *Bhagavad-gītā* in the university library after all those years of reading other books, searching for this transcendental knowledge, and the part when she heard the hand cymbals and followed the sound. It reminded me of a time in my life when I also heard the hand cymbals and followed the sound, knowing it would take me to the devotees. It's very relishable reading the different arrangements Kṛṣṇa makes for bringing His sincere souls back to Him.

Baṅke Bihārī Dāsī
Surrey, British Columbia
Canada

Japa Is the Anchor

I would like to compliment BTG for the Jan/Feb edition, which was one of the best I have ever read. As far as I am concerned, *japa* is the anchor of *bhakti-yoga.* The article "Creating a Culture of Pure Chanting" was much appreciated. Also, concerning the article about Bhaktivedanta Hospital, I hope we will hear more about it in the future and that it might be a catalyst for similar hospitals throughout the planet.

Daniel Joseph Haur
Lostwithiel, England

Love and Bhakti

What is the difference between love and *bhakti,* and how can both be achieved?

Adesh Shushil
Via the Internet

Our reply: Bhakti means "love" but refers to eternal love for Kṛṣṇa. Love in the material world is temporary. Love for Kṛṣṇa can be achieved by serving a guru who has *bhakti,* chanting the holy names of the Lord, serving the Lord's devotees, and performing devotional service. Real love here in the material world means giving Kṛṣṇa to others so they can also learn to love eternally.

Questions about Jñāna-yoga

What is *jñāna-yoga*? Does it require other types of yoga? What are the types of yoga? Is *jñāna-yoga* similar to philosophy? Is it worth pursuing *jñāna-yoga*? Who can attain it?

Witt Keller
Via the Internet

Our reply: Yoga means to link to the Lord, and *jñāna* means knowledge. So *jñāna-yoga* is a process by which one links to God through knowledge. This involves studying the scriptures, practicing austerity, and meditating on the self. One first understands that he is an eternal being different from the body. When one makes further progress, he understands the supreme as an impersonal entity free from material attributes. Understanding the personal form of the Lord is a higher stage of realization, attainable only through *bhakti-yoga.*

Besides *jñāna-yoga,* the other main types of yoga are *karma-yoga,* where one acts in this world but offers the fruits to God; *aṣṭāṅga-yoga,* where one meditates on the Lord by strict procedures like breath control; and finally *bhakti-yoga,* where one connects with God through acts of devotion, such as chanting His names, hearing about Him, and worshiping His form.

It is not worth pursuing *jñāna-yoga,* because it is a very difficult path. Only after many lifetimes may the *jñāna-yogī* realize that the goal is Kṛṣṇa and begin to worship Him. But one can do that immediately by the simple process of *bhakti-yoga.* Kṛṣṇa explains this in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (12.3–7).

Chanting and Regulative Principles

It is said that by chanting we get a higher taste so that we lose interest in material things and thus we automatically start following the regulative principles. If this is the case, then what is the use of following the four regulative principles [no meat-eating, illicit sex, intoxication, or gambling] before we get a taste in chanting?

Deepti Shah
Via the Internet

Our reply: When we get a higher taste by chanting, it becomes natural and easy to follow the regulative principles. We become more attached to Kṛṣṇa and detached from matter. But till such time, we should follow the rules, even though they may be difficult, because that way we show the Lord we are trying to give up sense enjoyment separate from Him. If we don't follow the rules, then chanting becomes even harder. It becomes like cooking while pouring water on the stove.

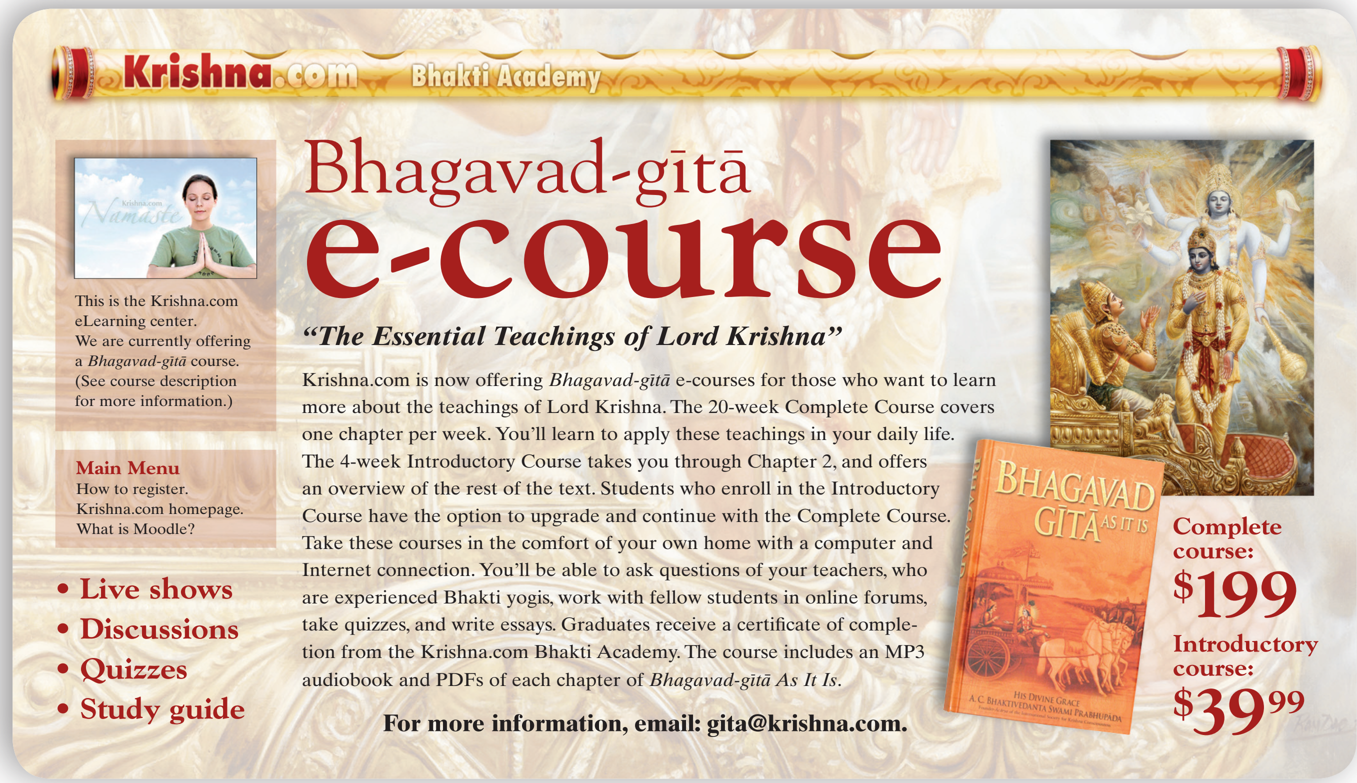
Furthermore, for success in chanting, we have to avoid the ten offenses to chanting. One offense is to maintain material attachments, which would surely include not following the regulative principles. ❁

Replies were written by Krishna.com Live Help volunteers. Please write to us at: BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Email: editors@krishna.com.

CORRECTION

After printing the January/February issue, we learned the identity of the photographers and the locations of two photos of Śrīla Prabhupāda appearing in that issue. Yaduvara Dāsa took the cover photo at the Mayapur Gaura Pūrṇimā festival in 1972. Viśākhā Devī Dāsī, his wife, took the photo accompanying Prabhupāda's lecture. That photo was taken at the ISKCON temple in Berkeley, California, in 1975.

These photos are from a large collection preserved by the Bhaktivedanta Archives. All followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda are indebted to those who photographed him and contributed their photos to the Archives collection. It is BTG's policy to give credit to these photographers when we know their identity.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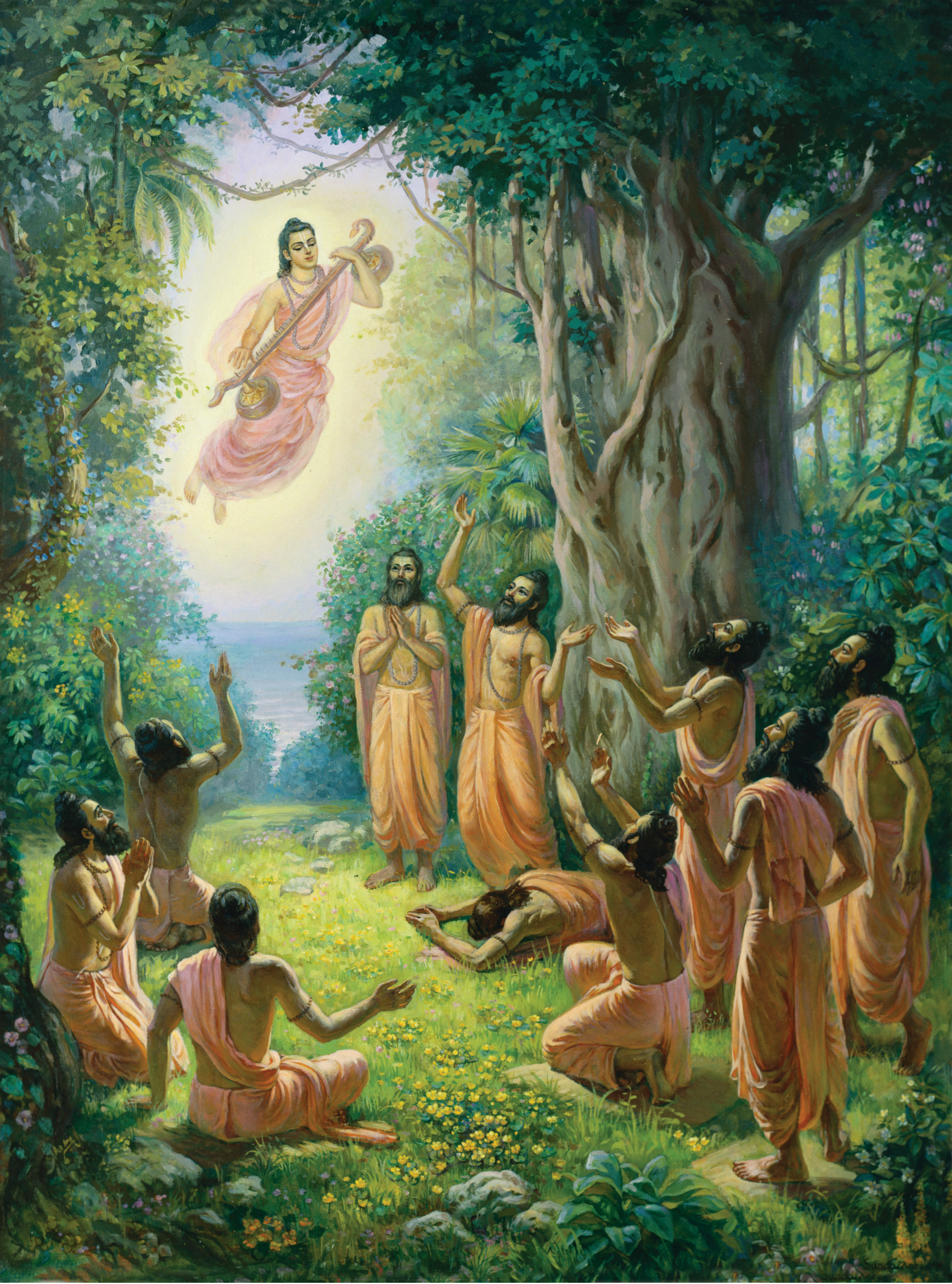


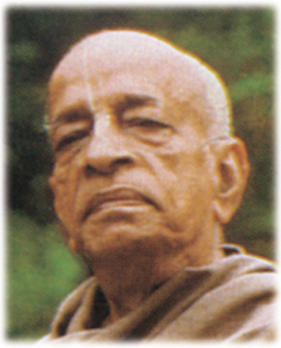
FOUNDER'S LECTURE
Vrindavan, India—November 12, 1976

DESIRE NOTHING BUT BHAKTI

To attain bhakti, or pure devotional service to the Lord, one must come to the point of desiring nothing else.

by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness



matto 'py anantāt parataḥ parasmāt
svargāpavargādhipater na kiñcit
yeṣāṁ kim u syād itareṇa teṣām
akiñcanānāṁ mayi bhakti-bhājām

[Lord Ṛṣabhadeva said:] "I am fully opulent, almighty, and superior to Lord Brahmā and Indra, the king of the heavenly planets. I am also the bestower of all happiness obtained in the heavenly kingdom and by liberation. Nonetheless, the *brāhmaṇas* do not seek material comforts from Me. They are very pure and do not want to possess anything. They simply engage in My devotional service. What is the need of their asking for material benefits from anyone else?"

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.5.25

LORD ṚṢABHADEVA is an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. He is explaining that devotional life, *bhakti-yoga,* is so exalted that persons engaged in it do not care for the heavenly planets, which are part of the material world, or for liberation. They consider those rewards insignificant. Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī, a follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, wrote *kaivalyaṁ narakāyate:* "The liberation of becoming one with the Supreme is as good as going to hell." And what did he say about the heavenly planets—Svargaloka, Janaloka, Maharloka, Tapoloka? *Tri-daśa-pūra ākāśa-puṣpāyate:* "They are as insignificant as an illusory flower in the sky."

Suppose you go to Svargaloka and become Indra, the king of the heavenly planets. That is not a permanent position. By pious activities you can become Brahmā, Indra, and so many demigods. You can hold such posts. But even if you go to Brahmaloka, the planet of Brahmā, what is the benefit? You have to come back. Similarly, even if you go to the Brahman effulgence, the impersonal spiritual energy emanating from Kṛṣṇa, you will eventually fall back to the material world.

The great sage Nārada, a pure devotee of the Lord who travels throughout the universe, arrives to instruct the Pracetās in devotional service.

Painting by Sundarangi Devī Dāsī and Vajrakhya Devī Dāsī

Therefore devotees are *akiñcana.* They neglect all these things. They don't care for them.

Karmīs, persons seeking material enjoyment, try to go to Svargaloka, the heavenly planets; yogis and *jñānīs,* or impersonalistic philosophers, want to go to the *brahmajyoti,* the effulgence of God. But a devotee is not seeking relief because a devotee is not uncomfortable in the material world. Why? Because a devotee sees God, Kṛṣṇa, everywhere, and wherever Kṛṣṇa is present, then everything is all right. That is the view of someone engaged in devotional service to the Lord.

Bhakti, devotional service, is not easy, but at the same time it is very easy. It is one moment's business. But we must be willing.

nārāyaṇa-parāḥ sarve
na kutaścana bibhyati
svargāpavarga-narakeṣv
api tulyārtha-darśinaḥ

"Devotees solely engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa [Kṛṣṇa], never fear any condition of life. For them the heavenly planets, liberation, and the hellish planets are all the same, for such devotees are interested only in the service of the Lord." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.17.28) Devotees are not anxious either to go to Svargaloka or to refrain from going. They are satisfied: "Wherever Kṛṣṇa keeps me, that is all right. Never mind whether it is heaven or hell." They feel that way because they perceive Kṛṣṇa within themselves and are concerned only with Him.

Wherever the Supreme Personality of Godhead is present, that place is Vaikuṇṭha, the spiritual world. The Supreme Lord is in every living entity's heart. Hogs and dogs have a heart, and Kṛṣṇa is present there. Does that mean that Kṛṣṇa is living with hogs and dogs? No. He is living in Vaikuṇṭha. Wherever He may live, He lives in Vaikuṇṭha. Similarly, the devotee lives with Nārāyaṇa, or Kṛṣṇa, so there is no question of hell and heaven for the devotee. He is in Vaikuṇṭha. If Kṛṣṇa is living in Vaikuṇṭha, the devotee is also living in Vaikuṇṭha.

The devotees are concerned with Kṛṣṇa, Nārāyaṇa. Therefore they are not afraid. The great sage Nārada travels everywhere. He goes to hell, he goes to heaven, and he goes to Vaikuṇṭha to see Nārāyaṇa. And as he travels, he chants and sings the holy names of the Lord. His business is to enlighten others. If he goes to hell, he advises the souls there, "Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa." And if he goes to Indraloka, the heavenly planets, he will advise the same thing. That is his business. Similarly, those who are preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness should not be afraid of hell or heaven. Wherever they go they simply preach, "Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa." That is their business.

Rejecting Material Desires

One has to become *akiñcana,* desiring nothing material, simply the lotus feet of the Lord. Our predecessor spiritual master Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has written, *hā hā prabhu nanda-suta, vṛṣabhānu-sutā-juta, karuṇa karoho ei-bāro:* "O Kṛṣṇa, along with Rādhārāṇī, please be merciful upon me." *Narottama-dāsa koy, nā ṭheliho rāṅgā pāy:* "I am fully surrendered unto You. Don't reject me." *Tomā bine ke āche āmāra.* "I have nothing except Your lotus feet."

This is the mood of *akiñcana:* "I have no other thing except You. So how can You reject me? Give me shelter."

If I think that I have another shelter besides Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, then I am not *akiñcana.* I am *kiñcana*: I have some other hope besides Kṛṣṇa.

Akiñcana means that my only hope is Kṛṣṇa. Kuntī Devī in her prayers addressed Kṛṣṇa as *akiñcana-gocara:* "You are realized by a person who has no desire to possess anything else." And Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said, *niṣkiñcanasya bhagavad-bhajanonmukhasya. Bhagavad-bhajana,* worship of the Lord, requires one to be *niṣkiñcana,* which has the same meaning as *akiñcana.* If you want to enjoy something material, there is no question of *bhagavad-bhajana,* because if you have even a little pinch of desire to enjoy material comforts, you'll not be admitted into the pure service of the Lord.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja.* (*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.66) He instructs us to surrender fully unto Him. *Bhakti-yoga* begins when one thinks, "No more. Enough of this material enjoyment." One must even reject *brahma-bhūtaḥ,* the stage of Brahman realization, in which one thinks, "I am in the *brahmajyoti.* I have become something important." No. Devotees reject even the *brahmajyoti.* As Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī says, *kaivalyaṁ narakā-yate:* "Existing in the *brahmajyoti* is like being in hell." This is the position of the devotee.

We Must Be Willing

Bhakti, devotional service, is not easy, but at the same time it is very easy. It is one moment's business. But we must be willing. Kṛṣṇa says, "Surrender unto Me." If we do that, then immediately we are on the *bhakti* stage. But we are not willing. Kṛṣṇa says directly, "Surrender unto Me," but people say, "When Kṛṣṇa is merciful to me, then I shall surrender." What is this nonsense? Kṛṣṇa is directly asking you. He has to become merciful again? What kind of mercy?

These are all pleas. Actually the person doesn't want to surrender. "I shall not surrender unto You, sir. I shall make some pleas, some excuses. That's all."

We do not know how many times we have been born and died, for millions and millions of years. Still, we are so shameless we want to do it again and again. We want to continue to enjoy material life, which is nothing but eating, sleeping, sex, and fear. This is every living being's business, from the small insect up to Brahmā and Indra. People do not want to stop this business. They want to improve it. "I am eating now without any plate, but if I can eat on a golden plate, that is advancement." A gentleman is eating tasty dishes, and a hog is eating stool. The eating is the same; the difference is just a matter of taste.

When we devotees are offered food on an airplane, we refuse it. We don't touch anything on the airplane because we know what it is. But the man next to us is happily eating the intestines of a hog. He is enjoying eating with his spoon and fork, and we are thinking, "Oh, what a nasty thing he is eating!"

We should completely give up anything material. That is *niṣkiñcana.* We have no business with anything material, whether on a golden plate or on the street or on the floor. It does not make any difference. Our business is to accept *prasādam,* what Kṛṣṇa has eaten. We are not interested in the intestine of hogs, and we are not interested in tasty dishes like *halava* and *puris* if they have not been offered to Kṛṣṇa. We are interested to eat what has already been accepted by Kṛṣṇa.

Those who eat Kṛṣṇa *prasādam* enjoy thousands of nice preparations. Why should we go to the restaurant? There are so many nice preparations offered to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is ready to accept from a devotee whatever he offers, within limits. There are people who say, "Whatever I eat I can offer." But that is not the process. The process is that you must offer Kṛṣṇa what He wants. When you invite someone to your home, you ask, "What can I offer you?" That is the etiquette. Not that the guest has to eat any horrible thing you offer.

Kṛṣṇa says that he eats the offerings of His devotees. But the atheist says, "Oh, you are offering so many nice dishes, but they are still lying there in front of your deity. He has not eaten." Such a person does not know how Kṛṣṇa eats. Kṛṣṇa can eat with His eyes. He can eat by touching. And even if He eats the whole thing, He can keep the whole thing present. The atheist cannot see this, but the devotee knows, "Kṛṣṇa is eating, and we shall take the *prasādam.*"

A Successful Life

We have to learn what *bhakti* is. If we advance in devotional service, then naturally we will lose our taste for the material world. We must know that by taking to devotional service we can leave the material world. The material world is the place where there is danger at every step. Everyone will have to die. So before death we must become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious. The end will come today or tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. Nobody will remain here. But success is to remember Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, at the end of life. We should practice that. Don't think, "I shall die tomorrow, but you are dying today, so I am better than you." Nobody will live here forever. Everyone will die, and we must be prepared for death. The devotee has no fear of dying, because if he is completely surrendered to Kṛṣṇa, then he is going back to Him, simply by surrendering to Kṛṣṇa.

And how does one surrender? Kṛṣṇa says,

man-manā bhava mad-bhakto
mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru
mām evaiṣyasi satyaṁ te
pratijāne priyo 'si me

What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millennia ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in b**u**t, long **ā** like the **a** in f**a**r (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in ev**a**de, long **ī** like the **i** in p**i**que. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **ri**m, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce consonants like **ch, jh,** and **dh** as in staun**ch-h**eart, hed**ge-h**og, and re**d-h**ot. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh.** So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or his great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

"Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me, and offer your homage unto Me. Thus you will come to Me without fail. I promise you this because you are My very dear friend." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.65) Kṛṣṇa is giving assurance. If we do only these four things, we will go to Him. The first is to always think of Kṛṣṇa. Anyone can do it. And everyone can offer Kṛṣṇa *patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam:* fruit, a flower, a leaf, or water. (*Bhagavad-gītā* 9.26) Everyone can hear from Kṛṣṇa to learn about Him. Where is the difficulty?

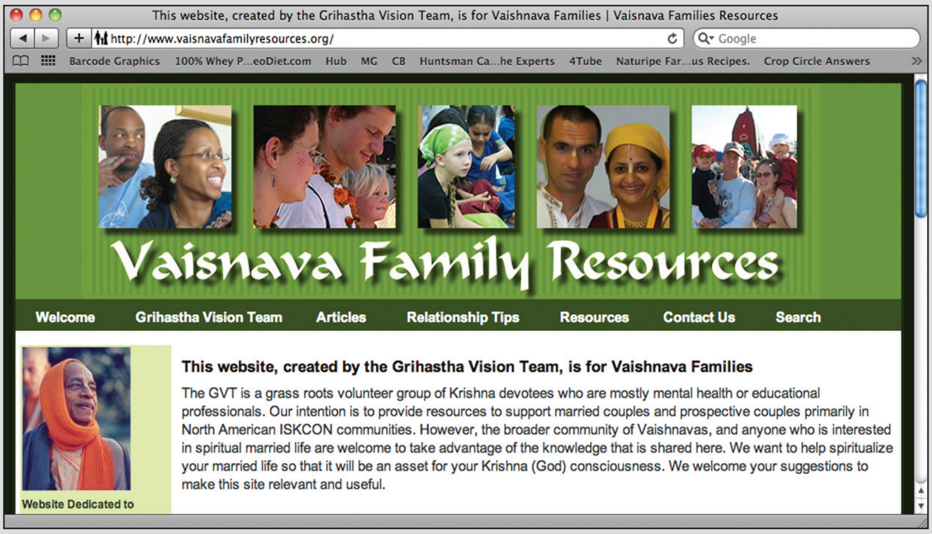
The difficulty is that we want enjoyment in this material world. But the devotee is not attracted to the material world, including the heavenly planets. And the devotee is not attracted by liberation or yogic perfection. Persons who desire those things are never peaceful. Those who want material enjoyment work hard for material profit or promotion to the heavenly planets. Those who are after liberation undergo severe austerities and penance to enter the impersonal spiritual energy. And the yogis also work very hard. Yoga practice is not so easy, especially in this age.

Our *bhakti-yoga* is so easy. Simply do the four things Kṛṣṇa asks. Take to *bhakti,* devotional service, and reject everything else. That will make your life successful.

Thank you very much. ❁

e-Krishna

Profiles of Kṛṣṇa-related websites



This website, created by the Grihastha Vision Team, is for Vaishnava Families

The GVT is a grass roots volunteer group of Krishna devotees who are mostly mental health or educational professionals. Our intention is to provide resources to support married couples and prospective couples primarily in North American ISKCON communities. However, the broader community of Vaishnavas, and anyone who is interested in spiritual married life are welcome to take advantage of the knowledge that is shared here. We want to help spiritualize your married life so that it will be an asset for your Krishna (God) consciousness. We welcome your suggestions to make this site relevant and useful.

Vaiṣṇava Family Resources— **www.vaisnavafamilyresources.org** is the website of the Grihastha Vision Team (GVT), a group of devotee volunteers who provide resources to support married and prospective devotee couples.

"A website is a good way to get information to a wide audience," said GVT volunteer Karṇāmṛta Dāsa. "The site is a natural outgrowth of our desire to get the word out about the importance of living a spiritual life in the *gṛhastha āśrama.*"

The Grihastha Vision Team wants to help spiritualize your married life so that it will be an asset for your Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

"On the website you will find articles supporting you in your marriage, including articles to help those facing marital difficulties," Karṇāmṛta said.

Browsing the site, you will find relationship tips and information about many aspects of maintaining a marriage. You will read about courses and upcoming events, as well as find links to videos and related websites. Read the biographies of team volunteers and review the strategies they employ to achieve the organization's aims. Learn about the six vital ingredients of strong marriages and the twelve principles and values behind a Kṛṣṇa conscious family life.

Karṇāmṛta says the website was designed to educate. Its aim is to improve the condition of marriage and family life in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, as well as in society at large. The GVT trains and provides mentors, and it spreads information to increase awareness of marital and premarital education.

After coming across the website, devotees and others often contact the Grihstha Vision Team.

"They appreciate our site very much," Karṇāmṛta Dāsa says. "We get visitors from all parts of the world. Many people want to know how they can create similar programs where they live."

Visit the website to make a donation, download some Vaiṣṇava help for you and your family, or read the results of a survey mapping out devotee attitudes toward marriage.

—*Antony Brennan*

Glossary

SEE OUR ONLINE GLOSSARY OF OVER 1,200 WORDS!
Krishna.com/glossary
WITH AUDIO!

Ācārya—a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Balarāma—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.

Battle of Kurukshetra—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.

***Bhagavad-gītā*—**the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna. (Cited as Bg.)

Bhakti—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.

Darśana—"viewing," audience with a deity or saintly person.

Dharma—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).

Godhead—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.

Gurukula—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").

Hare Kṛṣṇa—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Japa—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.

Kali-yuga—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.

Karma—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.

Kīrtana—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).

Kṛṣṇa—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").

***Mahābhārata*—**the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.

Māyā—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.

Māyāvādī—one who regards the Abs ultimately impersonal.

Modes of nature—the three qualities (goo and ignorance) that hold sway over all action n t e material world.

Nityānanda—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prasādam—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion (literally "mercy").

***Purāṇas*—**Vedic histories.

Rādhārāṇī—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.

Rathayātrā—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").

Sannyāsa—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.

Śrī—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).

Śrīla Prabhupāda—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

***Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*—**the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas,* which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.

Supersoul—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.

***Upaniṣads*—**the 108 essential philosophical treatises that appear within the *Vedas.*

Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).

Varṇāśrama—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).

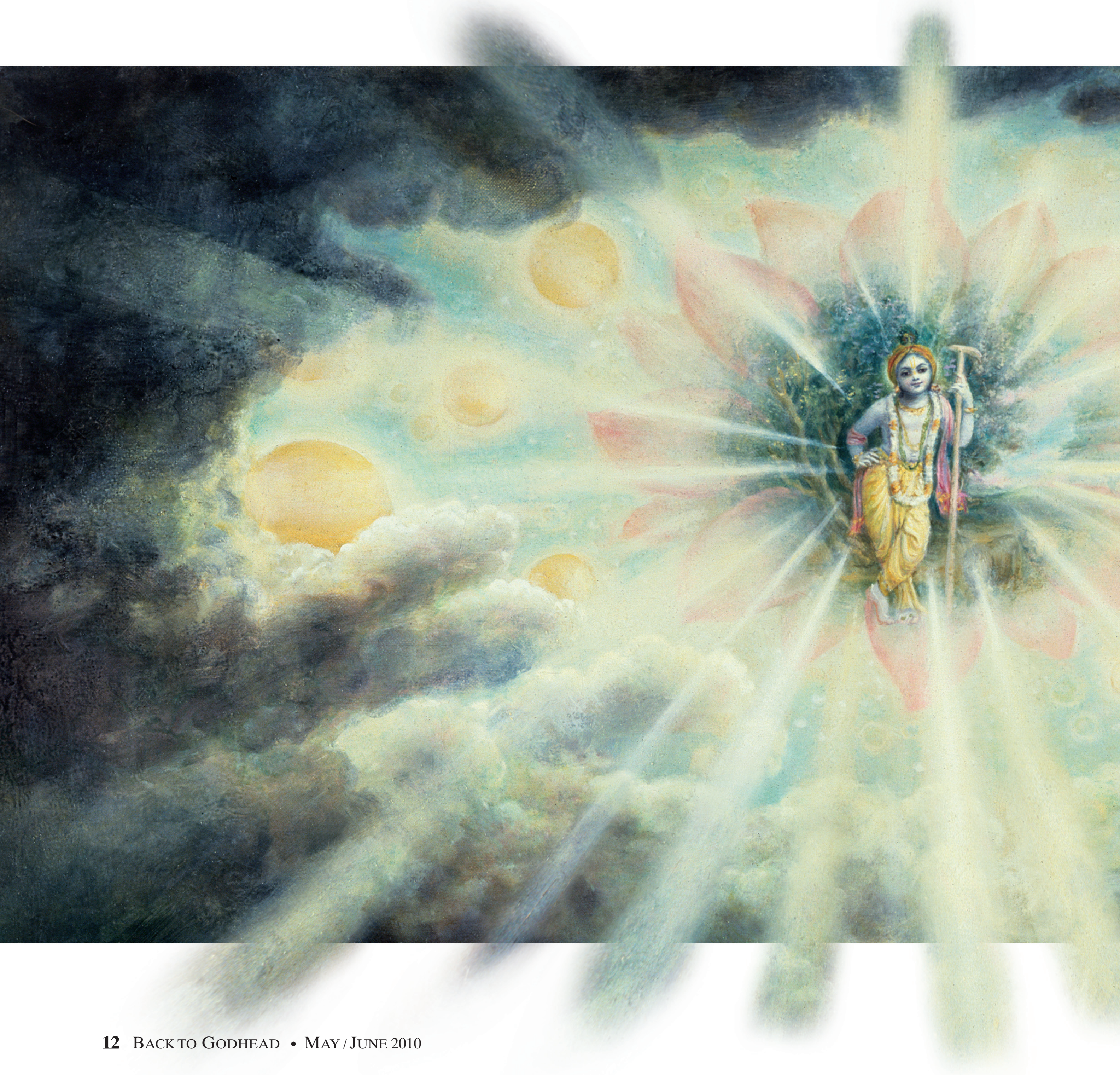
***Vedas*—**the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.

Vedic—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.

Viṣṇu—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

KṚṢṆA

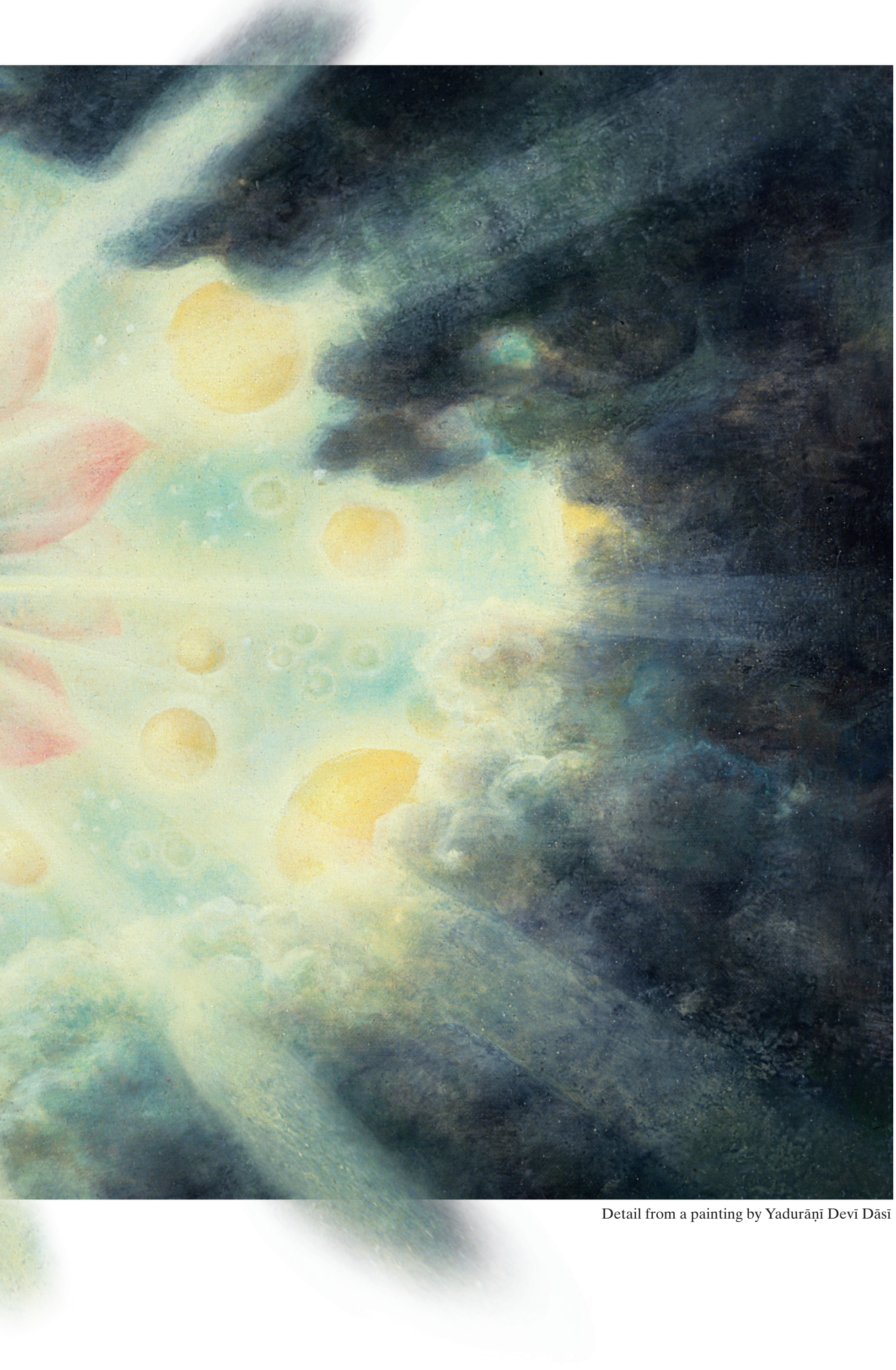


Lord of Paradox

How can God be within everything and not within everything?

—A brief analysis of Bhagavad-gītā *9.4, 9.5, and 9.6*

By Satyarāja Dāsa



Detail from a painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī

THE *Bhagavad-gītā* is one of the world's perennial wisdom texts. Because it offers knowledge of the Absolute Truth, some of its texts can be difficult to understand. Few are as difficult as verses four and five of Chapter Nine: "By Me, in My unmanifested form, this entire universe is pervaded. All beings are in Me, but I am not in them. And yet everything that is created does not rest in Me. Behold My mystic opulence! Although I am the maintainer of all living entities and although I am everywhere, I am not a part of this cosmic manifestation, for My Self is the very source of creation."

What is Kṛṣṇa saying here? First of all, He says that in His unmanifested form (*avyakta mūrti,* or Brahman) He pervades the universe. Clear enough: God is all-pervading. Then Kṛṣṇa says that all beings are in Him. Okay, if He's everywhere, then all beings exist in Him. No problem. But then it gets somewhat perplexing: He says He is not in them.

This is the beginning of the difficult part. Anyone who has even casually studied the *Gītā*—particularly Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*—knows that God is in everything as the Supersoul, known in Sanskrit as the Paramātmā. So

Although everything rests in Kṛṣṇa, He is fundamentally aloof, existing in His own abode, beyond the material world.

what does Kṛṣṇa mean by saying "I am not in them," when His presence in everything is confirmed throughout the Vedic literature?

After He disavows His presence in all beings, He says that everything does not rest in Him. This is in stark contradiction to His statement in the previous verse, wherein He boldly declares the opposite. Even Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, the renowned eighteenth-century Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava commentator, asserts that this is a contradiction and that a serious student of the *Gītā* must ask, "How might one resolve it?"

Indeed, Baladeva suggests that when Kṛṣṇa says "Behold My mystic opulence" (*paśya me yogam aiśvaram*), He is attempting to resolve the contradiction. Baladeva admits, however, that this is not resolution in any true sense but rather a proclamation that human words cannot actually explain the Lord: God has inconceivable potency (*acintya-śakti*).

Clearly, God is not bound by our mundane sense of logic. He is the creator of logic and, as such, transcends it. Thus, He is the Lord of paradox. According to the dictionary, a paradox is a seeming contradiction that is nonetheless true; it is something that exhibits inexplicable or contradictory aspects. Here's an example from the poetess Mary Shelley: "The silence of midnight, to speak truly, though apparently a paradox, rung in my ears."

We encounter a particularly glaring example of Kṛṣṇa's paradoxical nature in the *Śrī Īśopaniṣad* (Mantra 5): "The Supreme Lord walks and does not walk. He is far away, but He is very near as well. He is within everything, and yet He is outside of everything." Prabhupāda explains in his commentary:

> The contradictions given here prove the inconceivable potencies of the Lord. "He walks, and He does not walk." Ordinarily, if someone can walk, it is illogical to say he cannot walk. But in reference to God, such a contradiction simply serves to indicate His inconceivable power. With our limited fund of knowledge we cannot accommodate such contradictions, and therefore we conceive of the Lord in terms of our limited powers of understanding. For example, the impersonalist philosophers of the Māyāvāda school accept only the Lord's impersonal activities and reject His personal feature. But the members of the Bhāgavata [Vaiṣṇava] school, adopting the perfect conception of the Lord, accept His inconceivable potencies and thus understand that He is both personal and impersonal. The Bhāgavatas know that without inconceivable potencies there can be no meaning to the words "Supreme Lord."

But the two *Gītā* verses in question are more than mere proclamations of God's inconceivable potency. Let us look at these verses more closely.

Beyond Our Senses

By the term "unmanifested form" (*avyakta-mūrti*), Kṛṣṇa explains that although He is ever present, we cannot see Him with our gross senses. Śrīla Prabhupāda's commentary illuminates this idea by way of a verse from the *Padma Purāṇa,* averring that because Kṛṣṇa's form, qualities, and pastimes are all of a spiritual nature, material senses cannot perceive them. But Prabhupāda quickly adds that when a soul in the grip of the material energy is awakened to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, full understanding and perception of Kṛṣṇa gradually come to the fore.

In this initial verse, Kṛṣṇa tells us of His simultaneous transcendence and immanence: He is removed from matter and at the same time exists as its very basis. He referred to this complex relationship earlier in the *Gītā* (7.4–5). He is removed from the material world, although it rests on His energy. He is the source of the material world, and

HARE KṚṢṆA, HARE KṚṢṆA, KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA, HARE HARE
HARE RĀMA, HARE RĀMA, RĀMA RĀMA, HARE HARE
PRONUNCIATION: ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma (rhymes with "drama")
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Yamarāja Dāsa

He maintains it, but He is not dependent on it, nor does it affect His essential nature. He is free from material nature, but material nature is not free from Him.

This squares well with the commentary of the great tenth-century teacher Rāmānuja, who writes that 9.4 can also read as follows: "All beings are supported by Me, though I am not supported by them." No contradiction there.

In this way the commentaries of the great *ācāryas* explain 9.4. But then we have 9.5: "And yet everything that is created does not rest in Me." A clear contradiction, as Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has noted.

There is an easy way to understand this. Kṛṣṇa is reminding us here of His transcendence. Although everything rests in Him, at least in the sense that everything is dependent upon Him, He is fundamentally aloof, existing in His own abode, beyond the material world. In his purport, Prabhupāda evokes the image of Atlas, who, lifting the world on his shoulders, seems tired, as if he can accomplish his task only with great struggle. Kṛṣṇa is not like that, Prabhupāda tells us. Rather, Kṛṣṇa's involvement in the material world does not strain His energies one iota. In fact, He engages with matter through His manifestations as Brahman and Paramātmā, leaving His original form free to enjoy transcendental activity in the spiritual world.

To help us understand His inconceivable and mystical relationship with the material world, the Lord offers an analogy in the next verse (9.6), and here we might find at least partial resolution to the dilemma: "Understand that as the mighty wind, blowing everywhere, rests always in the sky, all created beings rest in Me." In other words, Kṛṣṇa is the backdrop that gives meaning to reality. He is like the thread that gives cloth its form and substance.

Change cannot be perceived without the background of changelessness. A mirage has no meaning if there's no desert backdrop. A movie cannot be seen without a movie screen. And without sky, the wind would have nowhere to blow. In the same way, though Kṛṣṇa is totally aloof—He is not in all beings and all beings are not in Him—He is very much here as well, fundamentally connected to everyone and everything as their very basis.

Dilemma Resolved?

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa's spiritual master, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, raises a question that might serve as an addendum to the question of Kṛṣṇa's inconceivability as expressed in these verses: Since Kṛṣṇa has explained, both by analogy and by describing His *acintya-śakti,* or inconceivable potency, how these *Bhagavad-gītā* verses might be understood, has He not already resolved the dilemma? Hasn't His explanation made the inconceivable conceivable? "If so," Viśvanātha writes, "then how is the Lord's mystic power inconceivable, which He Himself claims it is by saying 'Just see My mystic opulence'? After all, we now have a conceivable way of understanding His mystic power."

Although everything rests in Kṛṣṇa, He is fundamentally aloof, existing in His own abode, beyond the material world.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī then answers his own query: "The example of the sky is offered to give ordinary people an opportunity to begin to understand this subject." The operative word here is "begin." Without doubt, the subject of God and His inconceivable potencies is just that—inconceivable. All we can hope for is a hint, a taste, of that inconceivable truth. Indeed, Kṛṣṇa says that one can know Him as He is only by unmotivated devotional service (11.54). And even then, we can know Him only to the degree that He chooses to reveal Himself.

In conclusion, let us say that, without doubt, the verses in question can be understood in a simple and straightforward manner. After all, Kṛṣṇa is clearly making a distinction between His manifestation as Brahman, or as an all-pervading force, and His underlying form as Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By His impersonal manifestation and His expansive energy He pervades the cosmic creation. This is what He's saying toward the beginning of these verses. But He still remains aloof—this is His way of pointing out that His all-pervasiveness does not co-opt His transcendent personality, the very source of creation.

Prabhupāda alludes to this in his purport, when he says, "The planetary systems are floating in space, and this space is the energy of the Supreme Lord. But He is different from space. He is differently situated." So everything is in God's energy, which is an aspect of His self-existent nature, but everything is not in Him as Bhagavān, the Personality of Godhead, who is totally "other."

Though these verses can be understood in this way, in an ultimate sense they allude to the greater mysteries of God's nature, and therefore Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa acknowledges their contradictory status. If one contemplates such mysteries under the guidance of a teacher in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, great truths will gradually unfold, and Kṛṣṇa will be revealed in full. ❁

Satyarāja Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, is a BTG associate editor. He has written over twenty books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness and lives near New York City.

DĪKṢĀ WITHOUT TAPA

Initiation in Name Only

Voluntary restraint and the acceptance of discipline form essential parts of Vaiṣṇava initiation.

By Kṛpāmoya Dāsa

DID YOU HEAR the story of the man who rode up to the gates of our Mayapur, West Bengal, temple to sell ice cream? He had one of those tricycles you see a lot in India—the ones with a refrigerated box on the back. Nothing sells quite like ice cream on a hot day. Only he wasn't selling ice cream at all.

He opened the lid of the icebox, pulled out a hand bell and a bunch of papers, then began ringing the bell and calling out, "*Dīkṣā! Dīkṣā!*" ["Initiation! Initiation!"] He was selling *dīkṣā* and, as it happens, was selling it very cheaply: "*Dīkṣā doh rupya!*" or: "*Dīkṣā,* two rupees!" Although those trained in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement would not be interested in such "initiation," some visitors to the temple did gather around, examined the papers, and handed their money over.

Such *dīkṣās* are commonplace in parts of India. For a fee, a certificate of initiation is given, like a title deed bestowing a certain spiritual status and religious-community identity rights. A person receives a blessing and becomes an *adhikārī,* "one who has been awarded the right." For a relatively modest investment of cash, you too can be a more qualified person than you were yesterday. What's slightly more important is that you can tell others about your improved social status too. Your Dīkṣā Certificate, signed in ink by the guru, can also get you in to certain places and is very handy when you want to go to particular parties or festivals.

England's Landless Aristocracy

Over here in England, we have a long history of mankind's basic urge to own such deeds of entitlement. One of the formative episodes in the history of our nation was the Norman Conquest. Although it's hard for us to talk about any time when we've been beaten by the French, every English schoolchild knows the date of A.D. 1066, when the northern French invaded Britain, defeated King Harold in the Battle of Hastings, and never really went home.

The victorious William the Conqueror commissioned the *Domesday Book,* a record of every village and field in the land. He then proceeded to apportion those villages and huge

Śrīla Prabhupāda hands beads to a new disciple during an initiation ceremony.

tracts of land to all his friends, bestowing upon them ranks and titles according to their respective landholdings. Thus the English aristocracy was born, with all its lords, earls, dukes, barons, and viscounts. Even today, nearly a millennium later, a mere two hundred English families still own half of the land in Britain.

Yet over the centuries, many of the smaller aristocrats sold off their lands, holding on to only their hereditary title. Still later, even the titles were sold, bestowing upon the purchaser the distinction of a powerful traditional name, but with no factual wealth or power.

> ***Dīkṣā* is now being sold for a few pounds—or sometimes nothing at all—conferring only the notion of spiritual attainment.**

Thus today, for a mere £2500, you can become known officially as Baron Such-and-Such, baron of three villages—but without owning the villages. You'll receive an attractive, elaborately handwritten declaration scribed on vellum, sometimes dating back 300–400 years. You'll have the legal right, under British law, to have others refer to you by your new name and to sign yourself as such on all official documents.

Yet as for the land ownership that the title originally conferred on its owner, you'll see none of that. No serfs will doff their caps as you ride your white horse into "your" village. You won't get any tithes of the harvest either. Indeed, you won't have any power over anybody or anything, except the power to look up from your sofa and gaze at your nicely framed certificate proclaiming you a member of the English aristocracy.

Dīkṣā for Sale

Why am I giving you this English history lesson? Because just as powerless peerages are being sold on the Internet, conferring nothing on their owner but a new name and smug satisfaction, so *dīkṣā* is now being sold for a few pounds—or sometimes nothing at all—conferring only the notion of spiritual or religious attainment. The tricycles have come West.

Dīkṣā is the process of being enlightened with transcendental knowledge and committing oneself to the spiritual path under the guidance of an authentic teacher. It is not something that can be purchased out of a cold-box on the back of a tricycle. Its real price is commitment, demonstrated not only by an intellectual adjustment to one's belief system, but by some form of voluntary restraint and the acceptance of discipline as essential parts of the effort required for inner growth. As in all areas of life: no pain, no gain. Such personal austerity, or *tapa,* is said to be the factual spending power of spiritually progressive people. *Tapa* is "the wealth of the *brāhmaṇas.*"

When Brahmā, the original created being within the universe, was perplexed as to his origin and true identity, he tried by his own efforts to discover the truth. It was only after he heard the divine syllables *ta-pa* echoing from beyond the universe that he was able to comprehend that he should engage in meditation.

In classical Vaiṣṇavism, the guru does not award *dīkṣā* unless the prospective disciple has demonstrated some personal *tapa.* Rising early, bathing, eating frugally from a diet regulated by vegetables, fruit, and grains, chanting the Lord's holy names according to a numerical vow (in ISKCON that is sixteen times around 108 beads), engaging in menial service for the guru, abandoning sinful acts (such as intoxication, illicit sex, gambling, and eating of meat, fish, or eggs), and placing oneself at the beck and call of the spiritual master—all these are prerequisites for *dīkṣā.*

Without *tapa,* actual *dīkṣā* cannot take place. Even if the external formularies are conducted and titles awarded, no substantial inner transformation actually happens.

The book *Pañca Saṁskāra,* written in 1885 by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, explains the five essential components of Vaiṣṇava initiation and answers the question why, after such initiation, some Vaiṣṇavas are seen not to make progress:

> The answer is that Vaiṣṇava *saṁskāra* is the best, but at the present time it is practiced in name only. Both the spiritual teacher and the student block their own spiritual advancement by being content with only the external aspects of *saṁskāra.* Today, the deeper significance of *saṁskāra* is not understood. When the student submits himself to the teacher, the teacher gives *pañca-saṁskāra* and then abandons him. What good can come from *pañca-saṁskāra* of this type? Externally the student looks good, but internally there is nothing.
>
> The tongue utters the name of Hari . . . but the student is addicted to endless sinful practices. At night, he takes intoxicants and practices debauchery! O good teacher, how have you benefited your student? What is the difference in him before and after *dīkṣā*? In fact, he is worse. He is a hypocrite. There is no remorse: "I am sinful. It is my fault. How can my sin be given up?" These days no one thinks like this when taking shelter of a spiritual teacher. Sinful activities are performed without the slightest concern. What misfortune!
>
> Why is this? Because the wrong kind of relationship exists between teacher and student. The *śāstras* [scriptures] give rules to guide this relationship, but they are not followed. The student who is burning in the fire of material

> life, who analyses his predicament and concludes, “My relationship with material nature is not permanent; therefore I must take shelter of a spiritual teacher to obtain the feet of God,” has reached the stage of faith and is qualified to take shelter of a spiritual teacher. The teacher should study the student for one year and observe his atonement. This is called *tapa*—the faithful soul’s first *saṁskāra.*
>
> The word *tapa* is translated as “repentance, atonement, and the permanent impression of higher sentiment on the soul.” *Tapa* applies not only to the body, but also to the mind and the soul. If it is only physical, in the form of branding or stamping [the custom of marking the upper body with the symbols of Viṣṇu], then *tapa* has not actually taken place and religious practice becomes hypocritical. At the present time this kind of hypocrisy has weakened Vaiṣṇava culture. Without *tapa,* or inner repentance, the soul cannot live as a Vaiṣṇava. Without *tapa* the whole process becomes useless. Without *tapa* the heart remains impure. Therefore, good friends, seek atonement without delay!

Such a seemingly alarmist judgment on the bad practices of Vaiṣṇava *dīkṣā* of the 1880s was intended to be a strong criticism of the gurus of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s day. Yet it also stands as a permanent caution to any future would-be disciple collectors. Why such stern warnings from an otherwise compassionate and gentle Vaiṣṇava? Because the tendency of many would-be prophets, philosophers, and messiahs—at least those directly desiring to be socially known as such—is to gather as many devoted followers as possible. And because the tendency of many of those would-be disciples is to achieve that status with as little pain and commitment as possible.

These tendencies create the strong possibility that insincere gurus and uncommitted followers will find each other, a situation that has repeated itself down through the centuries. And the result is always that true and authentic *dīkṣā* becomes obscured by popular misconceptions.

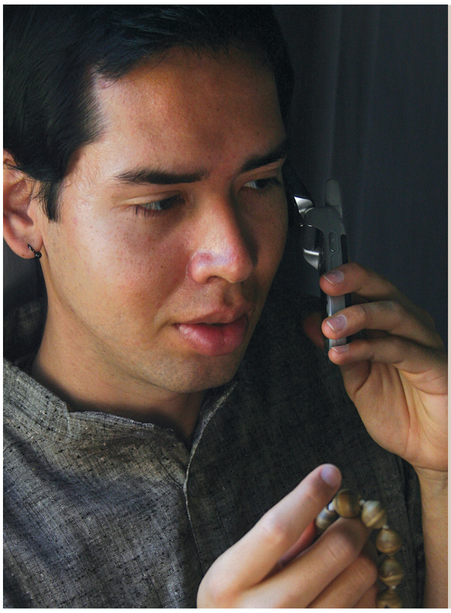
Westward Migration

For many centuries both the genuine Vedic system of *dīkṣā* and its pale shadow were restricted to India. Since the 1950s, however, swamis, yogis, and gurus have been coming to the Western countries and offering various kinds of *dīkṣā.* Finding their Western followers somewhat averse to *tapa,* they have trimmed their requirements to appeal to their audience.

For many years the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, devotees of Kṛṣṇa in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, were free from this practice. Represented by ISKCON through the personal vigilance of its founder-*ācārya,* His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the Western Vaiṣṇavas were held to the standard of *tapa* as prescribed in scripture. In recent years, however, there has been a marked increase in the level of *dīkṣā,* with diminishing levels of requirements. As Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava preachers attempt to emulate Śrīla Prabhupāda and his successes, some have begun to give “initiations” while leaving aside the traditional requirements of personal *tapa,* mutual scrutiny of guru-disciple, and the normal levels of affectionate guardianship offered by the guru to the disciple after *dīkṣā.*

The result is a large increase in the number of those now holding spiritual names with the suffix Dāsa and Dāsī. Unfortunately, like those barons and dukes with their framed certificates, those who have bought their *tapa*-less *dīkṣā* may find that all that has changed is their name.

Kṛpāmoya Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, likes to conduct Bhagavad-gītā *discussions for small groups of ISKCON members all over southern England. He is married and has three children.*



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Māyā's Friend NORM

The Vedic scriptures reveal that Māyādevī, Lord Kṛṣṇa's deluding potency, works with certain energies that have the capacity to make material life seem like normal life.

By Padma Devī Dāsī

As we go about our everyday activities in the material world, we are continuously confronted with the normality, or normalness, of material existence. In other words, we are constantly bombarded with the notion that material life, with all its mundane rationality, constitutes *normal* life and that this world is where we belong. As Śrīla Prabhupāda affirms, however, material life, which is devoid of love of Lord Kṛṣṇa and service to Him, is very *abnormal.*

Within the material realm of existence, it is Māyādevī, the personification of Kṛṣṇa's deluding potency, who convinces the materially embodied spirit souls that material life is normal. Consider the following conversation between Māyā, Norm (a fictional character herein invented to represent Māyā's ability to normalize material life), and John (who represents a typical materially conditioned person):

Māyādevī: Hi, John, this is Norm. I told you about him. He's one of my oldest friends.
John: Hello, Norm. Māyā has told me a little about you. You're a psychologist, is that right?
Norm: Yes . . . I work with people who have identity problems. I try to help them find themselves, to find their real selves.
John: Oh . . . that's nice. Do you use any particular methods in your work?
Norm: Yes . . . Well, let's say you were one of my clients. I would get you to think about what makes you feel the most normal. You know—in what circumstances do you feel the most habituated, the most ordinary? When is it that you feel the most comfortable?
John: I guess that would be when I am working at the office . . . or when I am playing with the kids . . . stuff like that.
Norm: But at which time do you feel the *most* normal, more than at any other time?
John: Hmm . . . I suppose it's when I think about how I have succeeded in creating a good life for myself

and my family, how it's given me a sense of belonging in this world . . . a sense of achievement. I think that's it. It's also knowing that I have done it all by myself—I didn't have to count on anyone else to do it.

Norm: Great! Well that's who you truly are—a great achiever, capable of being successful in this world and independent of others. That's who you really are, John, and you should be proud of it!

John: Wow, I guess you really know your stuff! I always thought that my true identity lay somewhere deep inside myself, in a place that I could only access by meditation and yoga . . . you know . . . a spiritual type of thing.

Norm: Well, John, the truth is that no one has ever found out who they are by doing yoga. It's simply not the way. You need to find the thing that makes you feel familiar, when you feel the most relaxed and at ease. That's when you are really in touch with yourself.

John: Yeah . . . I suppose so . . .

Māyādevī dresses up the material energy to delude the materially embodied person into a false sense of what is normal.

As a pure devotee of the Supreme Lord, it is Māyādevī's service to Kṛṣṇa to deceive materially embodied souls into thinking that their identity is material instead of spiritual and that the material environment is their normal environment. The potency by which she deludes the soul into such thoughts is called *āvaraṇātmikā śakti*, an energy given by Kṛṣṇa that enables her to cover the individual soul's original pure consciousness with whatever material desires are manifest within the individual's heart. Māyādevī's other potency, called *prakṣepātmikā śakti,* enables her to pull or throw the spiritual soul down into the material world, immersing the soul in materialistic life. By the combination of these two potencies, Māyādevī very skillfully dresses up the material energy to delude the materially embodied person into a false sense of what is normal.

Māyādevī's *āvaraṇātmikā* potency instills the notion "I am comfortable within my current situation; everything is fine with my material life. Why should I change it?" As Śrīla Prabhupāda explains:

> This spell of *māyā* is called *āvaraṇātmikā śakti* because it is so strong that the living entity is satisfied in any abominable condition. Even if he is born as a worm living within the intestine or abdomen in the midst of urine and stool, still he is satisfied. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 4.7.44, Purport)

In the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.30.4) Lord Kapila states that "the living entity, in whatever species of life he appears, finds a particular type of satisfaction in that species, and he is never averse to being situated in such a condition." Overcome by such an illusion, materially embodied beings cannot understand whether they are happy or distressed, fortunate or unfortunate, and so on. Nor can they understand that Māyādevī's *āvaraṇātmikā* potency has debilitated their capacity to distinguish between what is false and what is normal. Thus the materially embodied person consequently endures Māyādevī's façade of ordinariness, rationality, and familiarity—i.e., normality.

Primarily the *āvaraṇātmikā* potency infiltrates the materially embodied soul's consciousness by means of some form of material identity. After collecting countless impressions from the material world, the materially embodied person's mind and intellect offer a type of "false identity package deal" to the pure spirit soul, based on these impressions. The inherently pure soul must thereby choose whether to accept or reject what is being offered. If the soul accepts the deal, Māyādevī's *āvaraṇātmikā* potency makes the person's choice seem like the normal, or natural, thing to do. Māyādevī thereby smoothes the soul's path towards a life founded on a particular material identity. For souls who reject the deal, Māyādevī withdraws her potencies and allows them to progress toward realization of their spiritual identity, their actual identity. Such is the service of Māyādevī.

The Spell of Diversion

Through her *prakṣepātmikā* potency, defined as her "spell of diversion" (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 20.6, Purport) Māyādevī throws spiritual souls down into material existence, compelling them to adopt reasons for remaining entangled in material life. By convincing them that spiritual life is for fools, the *prakṣepātmikā* energy propels spiritual souls away from religious activities through aversive arguments. The *prakṣepātmikā* energy thereby works as an antithesis to spiritual life by antinormalizing or making unattractive the path of spiritual self-realization. The confused spiritual soul thereby learns to think of spiritual life as abnormal and unnatural, or perhaps as a life that befits fanatical, extremist, emotionally deprived, or less intelligent persons. At the very least, the materially embodied person who succumbs to the antinormalizing influences of Māyādevī's *prakṣepātmikā* potency is overcome with the thought that "spiritual life just isn't for me": Prabhupāda writes,

> When somebody is trying to come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the *prakṣepātmikā-śakti* will dictate, "Why are you going to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness society? There are

> so many restrictions there, so many rules and regulations. Better give it up." And the conditioned soul thinks, "Why, yes, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness is nonsense. Let me give it up." (*Dharma: The Way of Transcendence*, Chapter 10)

Our conceptions of what constitutes our everyday mundane experiences are often distorted, perverted, and exaggerated due to the depth of our conditioning by the material energy. We perceive that we are experiencing the results of arrangements we ourselves have made for our own material prosperity, when in actuality we are experiencing reactions to our past activities. Within this predicament we do our best to normalize our material indulgences and their subsequent consequences, according to the demands of our material senses. Such attempts by materially embodied souls to normalize their own suffering within the material world are also symptoms of contamination by Māyādevī's *āvaraṇātmikā* and *prakṣepātmikā* potencies. Pitifully, these two potencies end up dictating our own arguments in favor of material life.

Sophisticated Illusions

We would be wise to not underestimate the sophistication and strength of Māyādevī's normalizing and antinormalizing capacities, her ability to confuse us about what is normal and abnormal for the eternally spiritual person. She has the capacity to bewilder and thereby encumber both the beginner and those more advanced on the spiritual path. Even though we may have been devotees for many years, we still risk being exposed to these potencies and overcome by them. They often gain ground in undetected and unanticipated ways. "Māyā, the energy underlying all material existence, is more subtle than ordinary phenomena." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* 10.85.44, Purport). Here's an example of the subtle effects of Māyā's potencies: "Māyā is so subtle that even if one is able to avoid hearing about sex, money, and atheists, and even if one joins a society of devotees, one may still become a victim of pride and hypocrisy." (*Nārada-bhakti-sūtra,* 4.64, Purport). The qualities of pride and hypocrisy are certainly ominous enough to transform a spiritualist into a materialist.

In essence, the *āvaraṇātmikā* and *prakṣepātmikā* potencies challenge our experience of normality. While we may be able to understand the philosophy of what constitutes normal (or spiritual) life and abnormal (or material) life, our everyday experiences may very well leave us confused. As people dedicated to advancing spiritually, we want to feel comfortable yet not lax; we want to be dedicated yet not fanatical; we want to be surrendered to spiritual authority yet still maintain some independence; and we want to be assured that we are on the right path yet also go our own way. Within such circumstances we do our best to identify the fine lines that separate our spiritual consciousness from our material consciousness. That is, we do our best to perceive what constitutes our normal consciousness and what constitutes our abnormal consciousness. Reliance on relevant knowledge from the Vedic scriptures can enhance our perceptions of such differences.

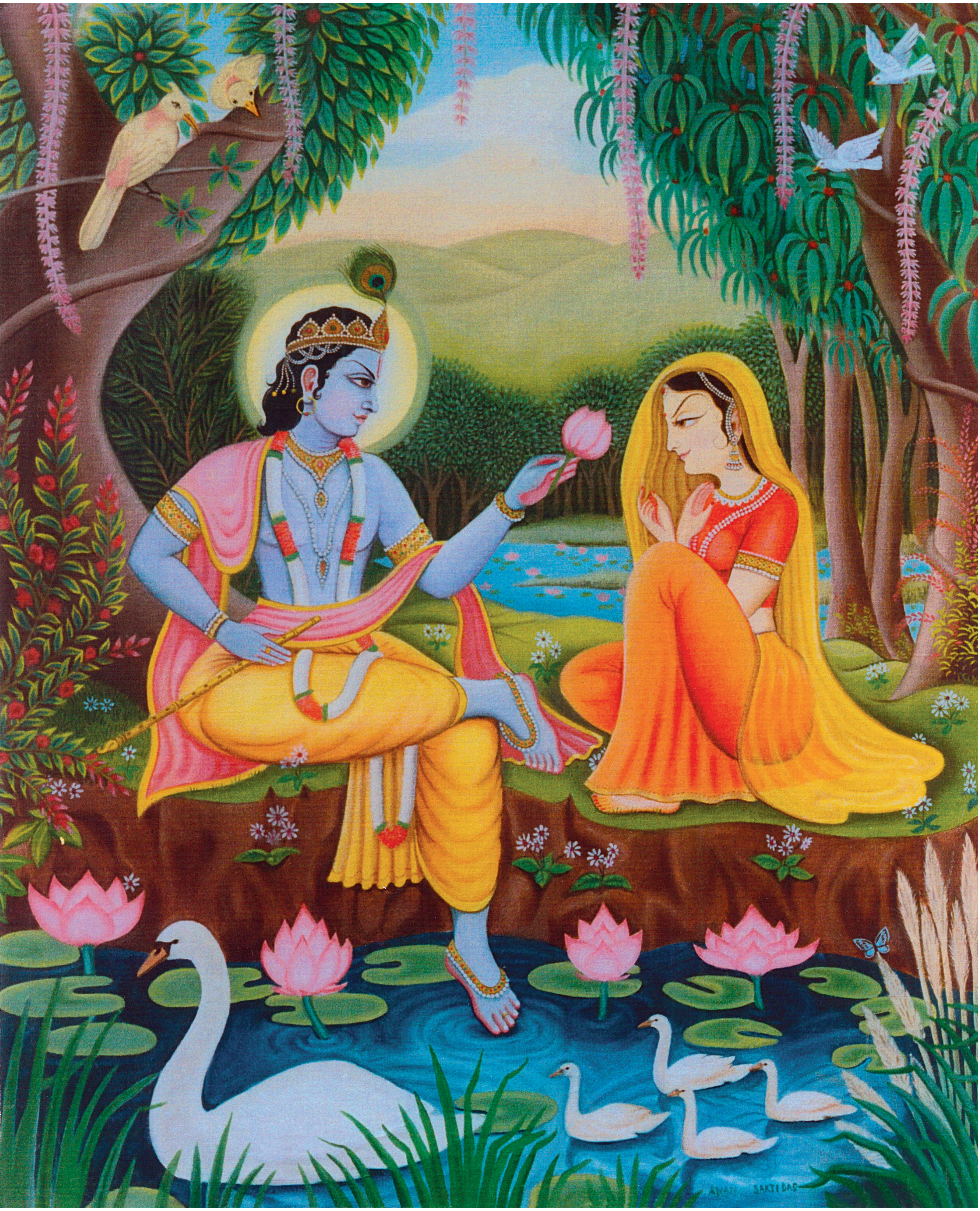
According to Śrīla Prabhupāda, normal life means to love Kṛṣṇa. It means to experience the love that Kṛṣṇa has for us as parts of Him. It means to be attracted to Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and to desire to please Kṛṣṇa. When we are influenced by Kṛṣṇa's internal spiritual energy rather than by His external material energy, then we can be assured that we are experiencing normal life—spiritual life—which is synonymous with spiritual consciousness. By cultivating such an understanding of what is normal, what is usual, what is intrinsic to our spiritual selves, we can relinquish all of our cumbersome abnormalities and return to our inherent, peaceful existence of loving Kṛṣṇa. As Prabhupāda said:

> We being part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, our natural tendency is to serve Kṛṣṇa. Natural tendency. It is not artificial. When you forget Kṛṣṇa, that is artificial. So our normal life means to love Kṛṣṇa, to serve Kṛṣṇa. That is our normal life. Without serving Kṛṣṇa our life is abnormal, madman's life. (Conversation, 1975, Nairobi)

Padma Devī Dāsī is a disciple of His Holiness Prabhaviṣṇu Swami. After completing her university studies in Australia, she moved to Vrindavan, India, where she hopes to stay. She plans to write and publish Kṛṣṇa conscious books.

TEMPLE WEBSITES

Many ISKCON centers have their own websites. To limit the number of pages taken up by the list of ISKCON centers that we run in each issue (pp. 59–61), we don't include websites as part of the listings. If you'd like to find out if a temple has a website, log on to Krishna.com and click on "Address list" under QUICK LINKS on the home page.


ANAN SAKTI DAS

The DIVINE FORM

An artist realizes his dream of finding the perfect form.

By Ananta Śakti Dāsa

DURING MY SCHOOL days in the 1960s, it wasn't difficult to see that the modern education system was a kind of slaughterhouse for the mind and intellect, a place where individuals were reduced to packaged goods to be consumed by an exploitative society. At age fourteen I decided to become an artist/naturalist, which meant spending lots of time absent from school but present in my local library, and exploring riverbanks, shorelines, and wooded areas. In the library I met illustrious teachers every time I opened an art book. Great artists like Picasso, Da Vinci, Gaugin, Raphael, and the Pre-Raphaelites taught me so many lessons in the use of color, tone, composition, and most of all, imaginative expression. In the great outdoors, Mother Nature was a wonderful teacher who introduced me to the miracle of changing seasons, wherein infinite varieties of fascinating creatures coexist in an ecological wonderland.

With so much inspiration available for a budding artist, where would I start? I thought I'd give the educational system another try, and I visited the local art college. The head of the Fine Art section was a waffling intellectual living on cloud nine, so I gave that

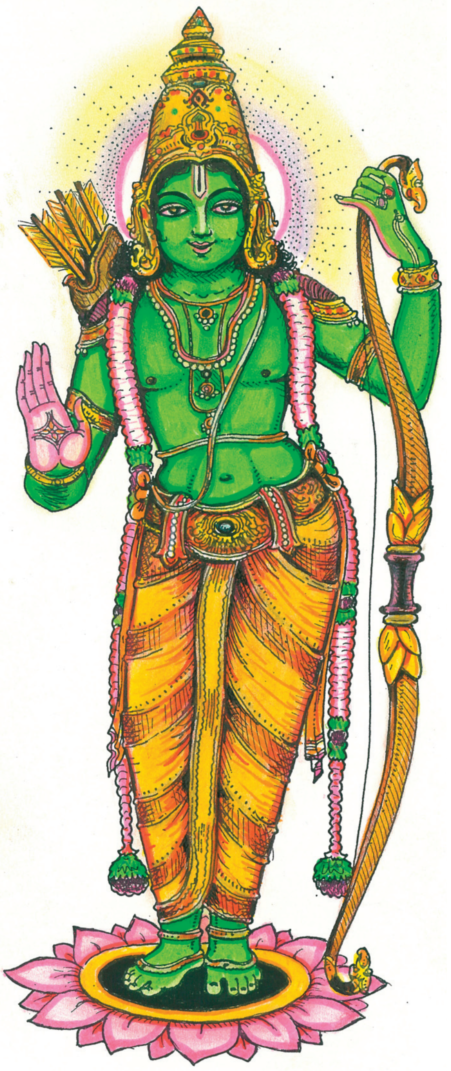
Left: Oil on canvas, 1986. "The figures are borrowed and restyled from an Indian print and a new background created to produce an Eastern/Western mix." Above: Author photo by Indulekhā Devī Dāsī.

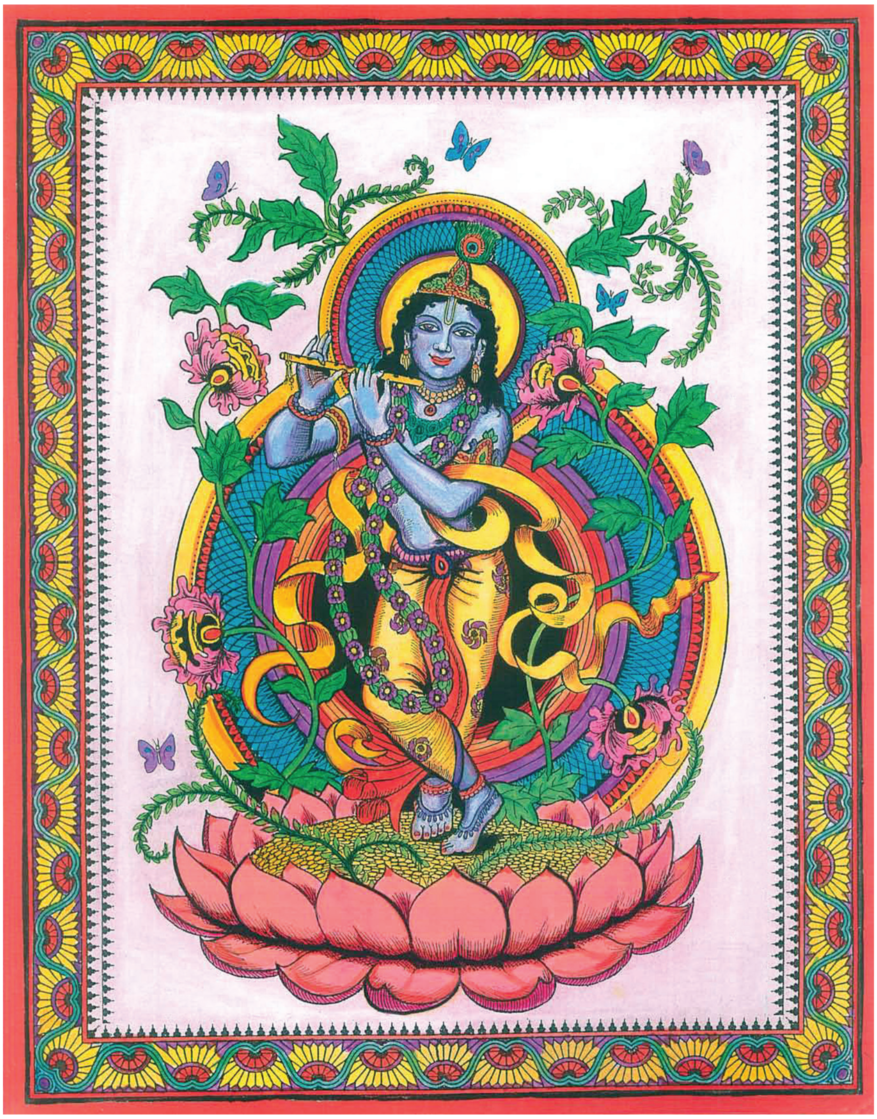
a miss. The Graphic Design department was all about selling products and making a living, but at least that was practical. I enrolled, but the psychedelic generation I was a part of had a profound effect on my consciousness. I needed answers to the important questions of life: Who am I? Where am I going? What is the purpose of life?

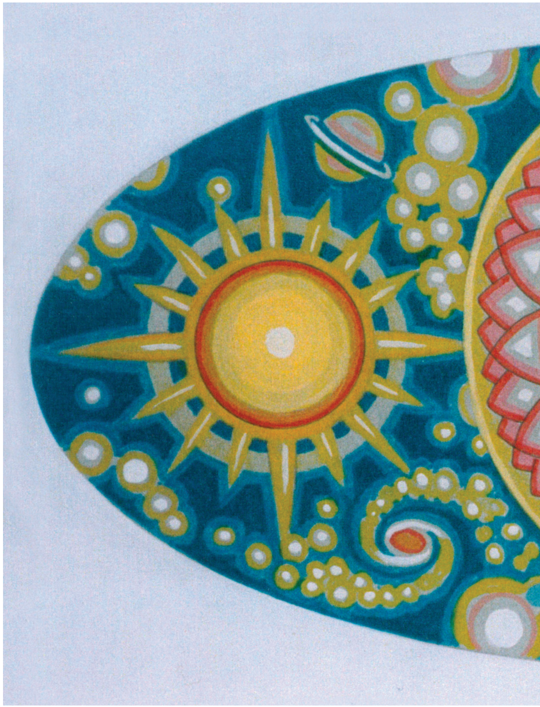
I concluded that art is best when it encapsulates the answers to these questions in a new, exciting way. But what are the answers? The Graphic Design department was just going to engage me in the advancement of consumerism, so I left.

My best friend at that time was Ron Holbeche, a Christian mystic who painted vibrant canvases that were exhibited in the more progressive churches. He always talked to me of God and service to God. He was like my guru and always asserted, “Man was made to serve God.”

Ron and I both craved a vision of a perfect person, and we had our own conceptualizations of what that meant. Ron painted the silhouette of a young Adonis male filled with hundreds of bright rainbow colors, whereas I considered that a perfect person must be seen to contain a harmonious combination of aggressive logic and gentle intuition. I reasoned that to be complete, such a being would be androgynous. I decided to depict this ideal not as a hermaphrodite, but in a symbolic way, with half the body male and the other half female, much like the Śiva-Śakti form seen in Indian temples.





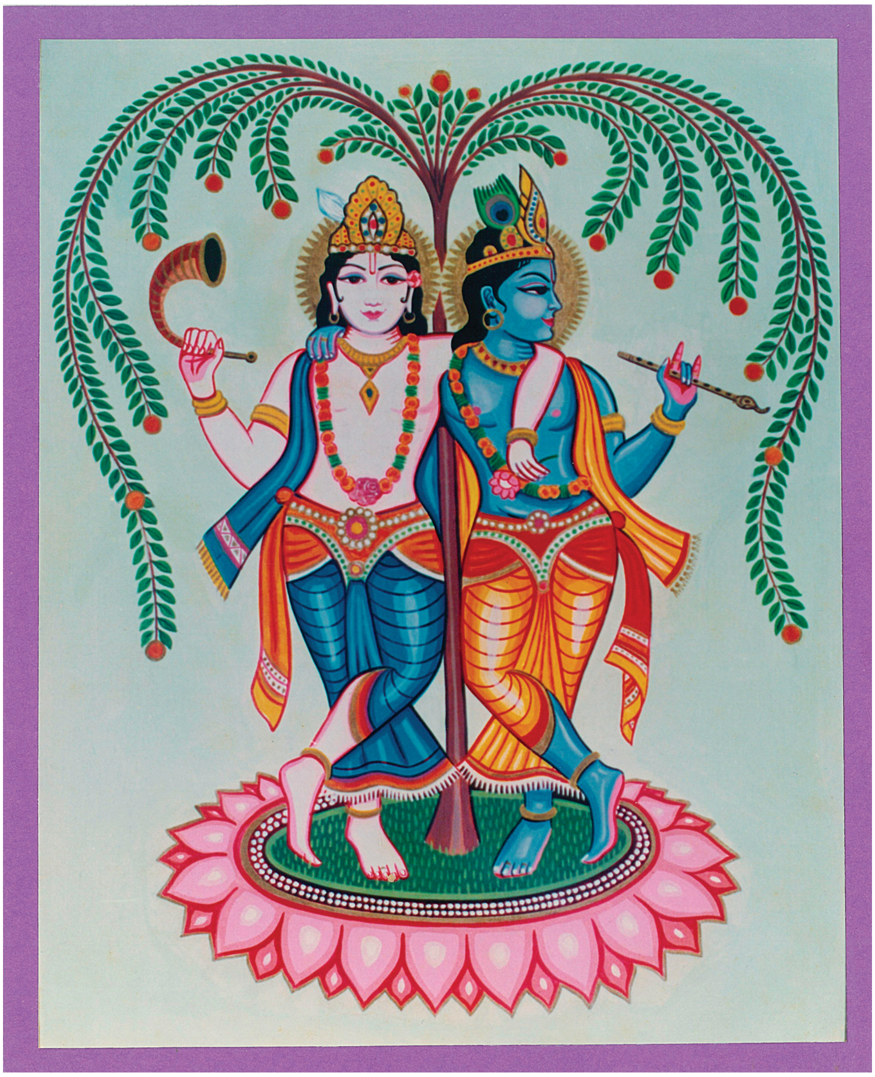


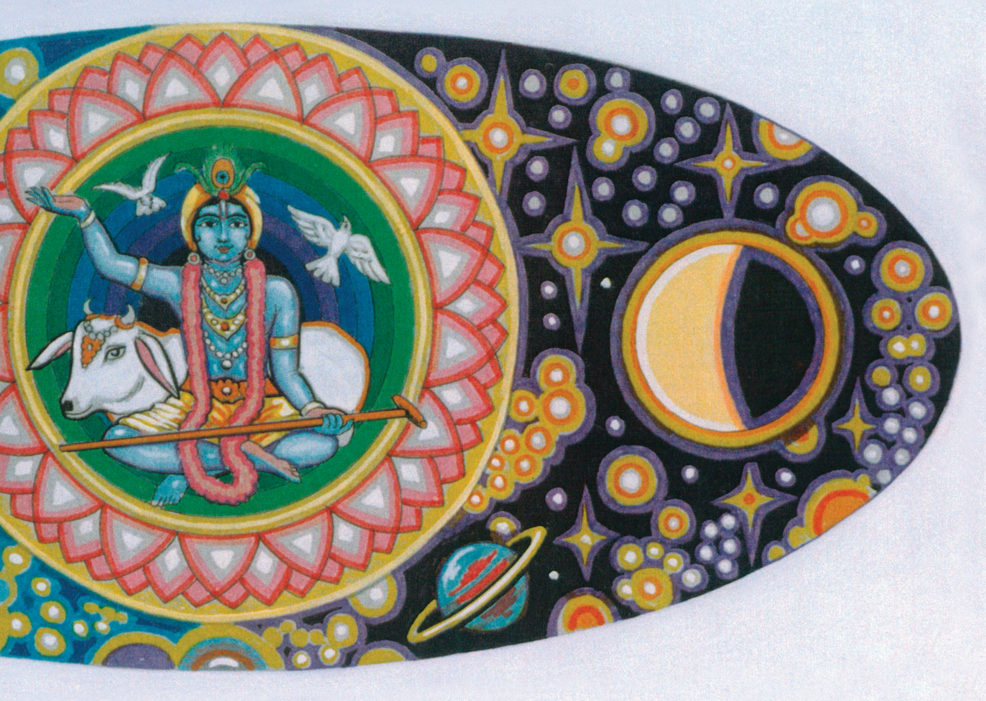
Encounter with Lord Rāma

At about this time, I built a tepee of the American Indian style, lived in a forest commune, and made an independent living as a portrait artist. I also specialized in designing and making fringed, beaded moccasins for the hippie community. It was a busy, productive life.

Then, as if by divine providence, an art college friend, upon returning from a visit to Bangkok, gave me some rice-paper rubbings taken from bas-reliefs of divinities of the temple of the reclining Buddha. Although I didn't know it at first, the images depicted the pastimes of Lord Rāmacandra. I immediately appreciated the combination of delicate exquisiteness and divine irresistible power that Rāmacandra personified while upon His chariot, bow drawn, ready to slay His evil enemy.

I started work on a series of highly detailed color studies based on these rubbings. I became obsessed and addicted to these forms. They represented sweet perfection to me. One of my friends, who had visited Kṛṣṇa's holy town of Vrindavan, India, then told me that the divine person was Rāmacandra, an incarnation of the



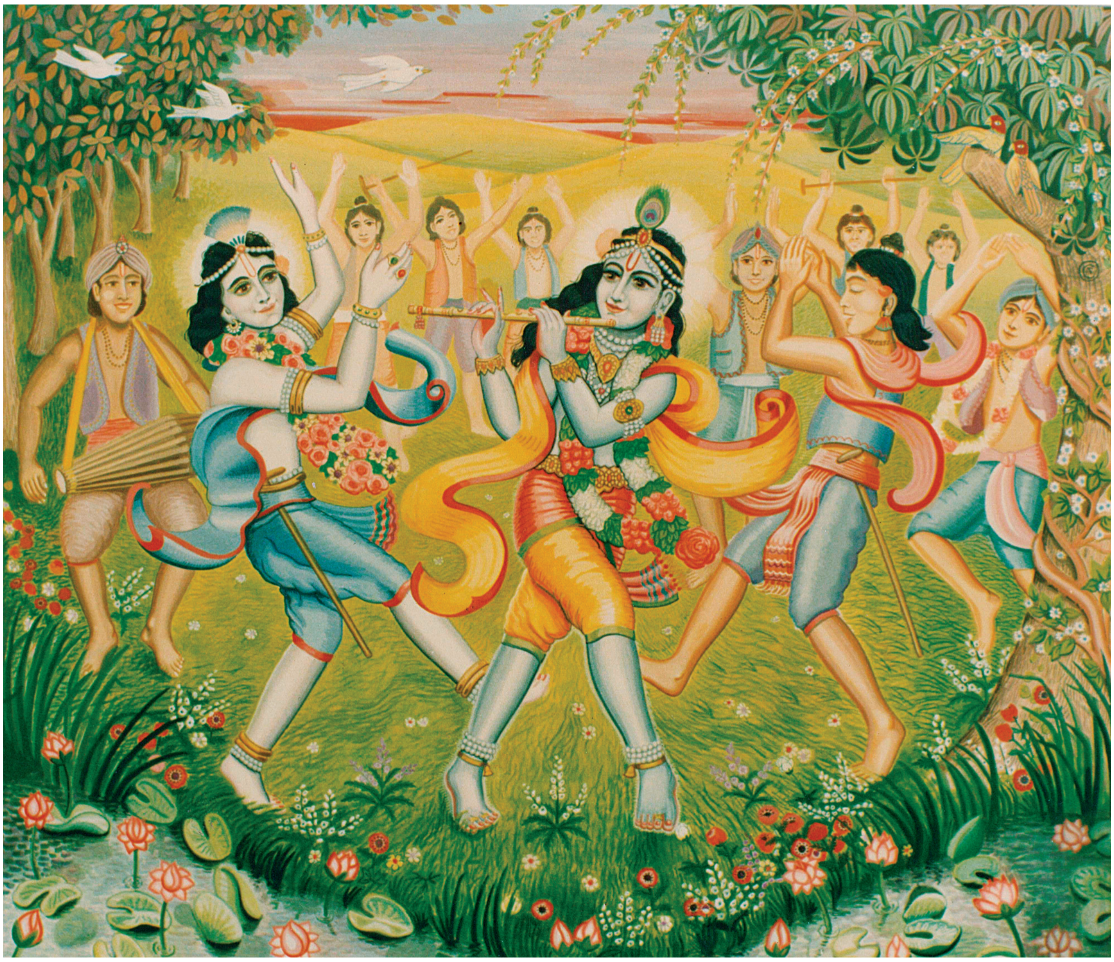


Far left: Mixed media "Inspired by a paper lampshade from Japan. Border from BBT Bhāgavatam *cover colored in."*

Above left: "Adapted from image from an out-of-print textbook on Indian gods."

Left: Behold My Mystic Opulence. Mixed media (ink & gouache), 1989. "This completely original study represents a mystic eye with Kṛṣṇa sitting in the pupil, orchestrating the movements of the sun and moon."

Above: Acrylic on board, 1981 "Inspired by an Indian motif."



Right: The Lord of the Dance. Oil on canvas, 1978. "Completely original."

Below: Gopal. Pastel and ink. "This picture was based on a pencil drawing that appeared in an early BTG."

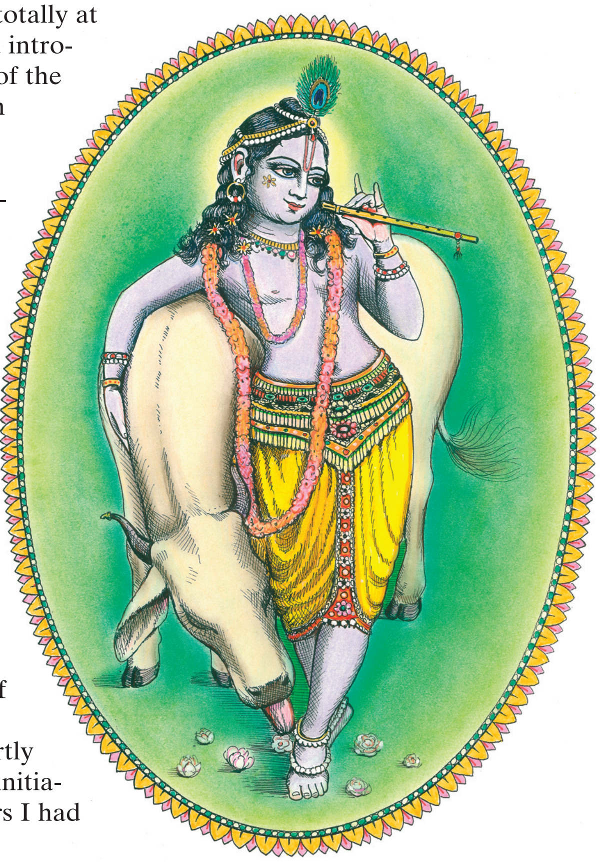
Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. He gave me some Spiritual Sky incense (made by Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees) and advised me to offer a stick a day to the figure of Kṛṣṇa on the packet, which I did.

Around this time I received a surprise visit from someone who had been given my address. Her name was Carol, and she was from the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple in Toronto. After introductions, she wanted to teach me a mantra. I responded by closing my eyes tight and repeating over and over again, with rapt attention, the words she gave me: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

As I was doing this, a beautiful bluish person of independent power, much like the figure on the incense packet, entered my consciousness. This person personified bliss and possessed a body of pure energy, just like liquid sapphire. I was stunned, blessed, and totally at a loss for words. Carol had introduced me to the chanting of the holy names, for which I am forever grateful.

Soon after, I visited the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple in Watford, just outside London, and had *darśana* with the presiding Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gokulānanda. That was probably the greatest revelation I ever had. It seemed the ultimate deja vu experience, and my intuition made sense when the devotees explained that we all have an eternal loving relationship with God. It simply needs to be awakened by the glorification of His holy names.

I joined the temple shortly after and received formal initiations. In the following years I had

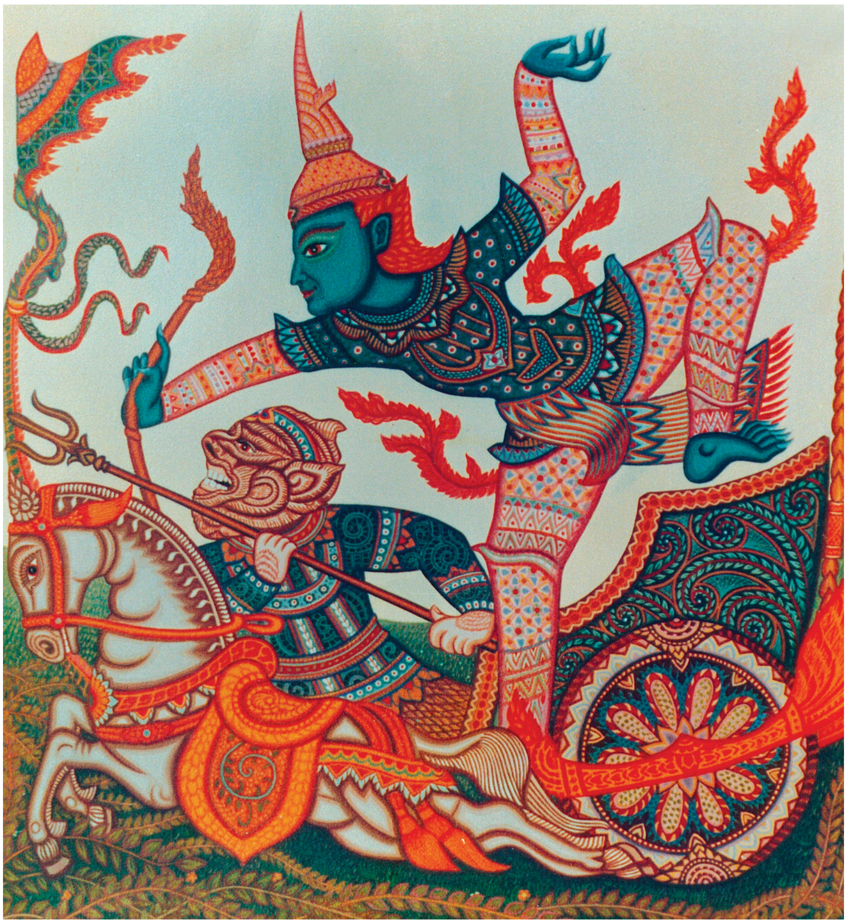


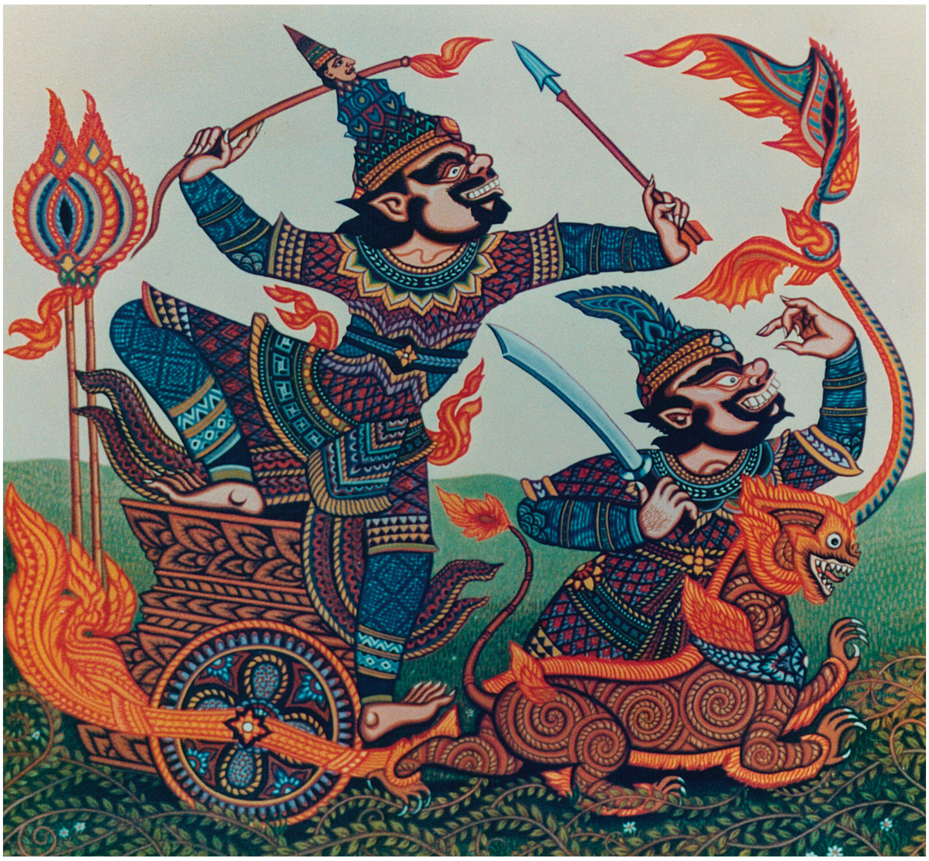
many opportunities to study and glorify the divine forms of the Lord in His multifarious aspects and also to do portrait studies of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Prabhupāda.

God's Unique Spiritual Form

Discovering the actual form of our most ancient of friends, that friend who has been patiently guiding and tolerating us since time immemorial, must surely be the greatest of all discoveries and experiences. Growing up in the patriarchal Christian tradition, I learned through art that God, being the original father, must look like a mighty yet old and bearded Anglo/European man. He casts stern glances in all directions while sitting on His kingly throne surrounded by angels and light. At slight provocation He hurls flaming thunderbolts at those who dare defy His authority.

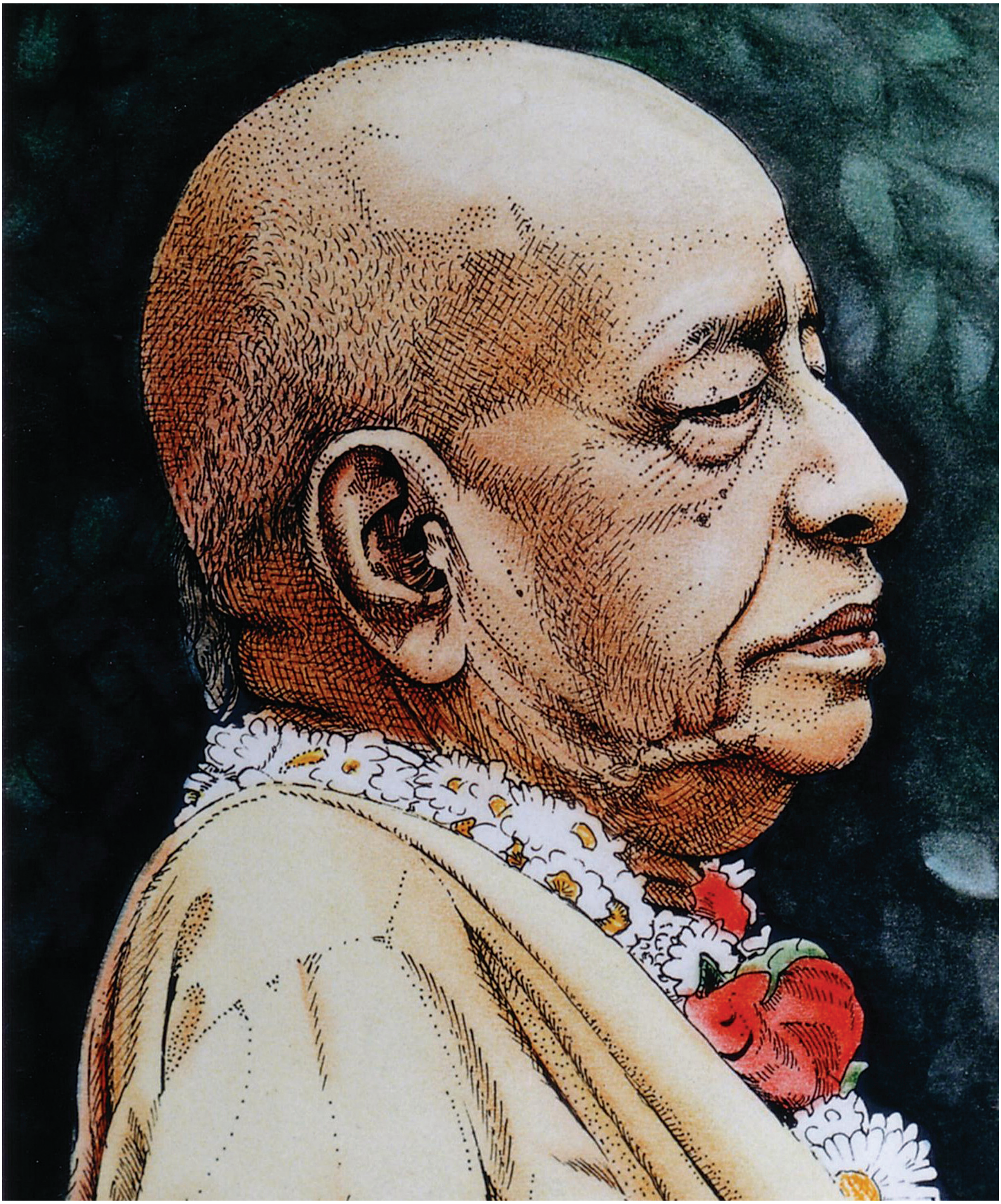
This anthropomorphic projection surely strikes fear and reverence into human hearts, but does





Above: Ram and Hanuman. Acrylic on board, 1977. "Stylized Hanumān is meant to look fiery and determined."

Left: Ravana. Acrylic on board, 1978. "These studies are from marble reliefs. I filled in the basic forms with masses of color details and patterns of color and added background for support."



such a contrivance inspire love? I think not.

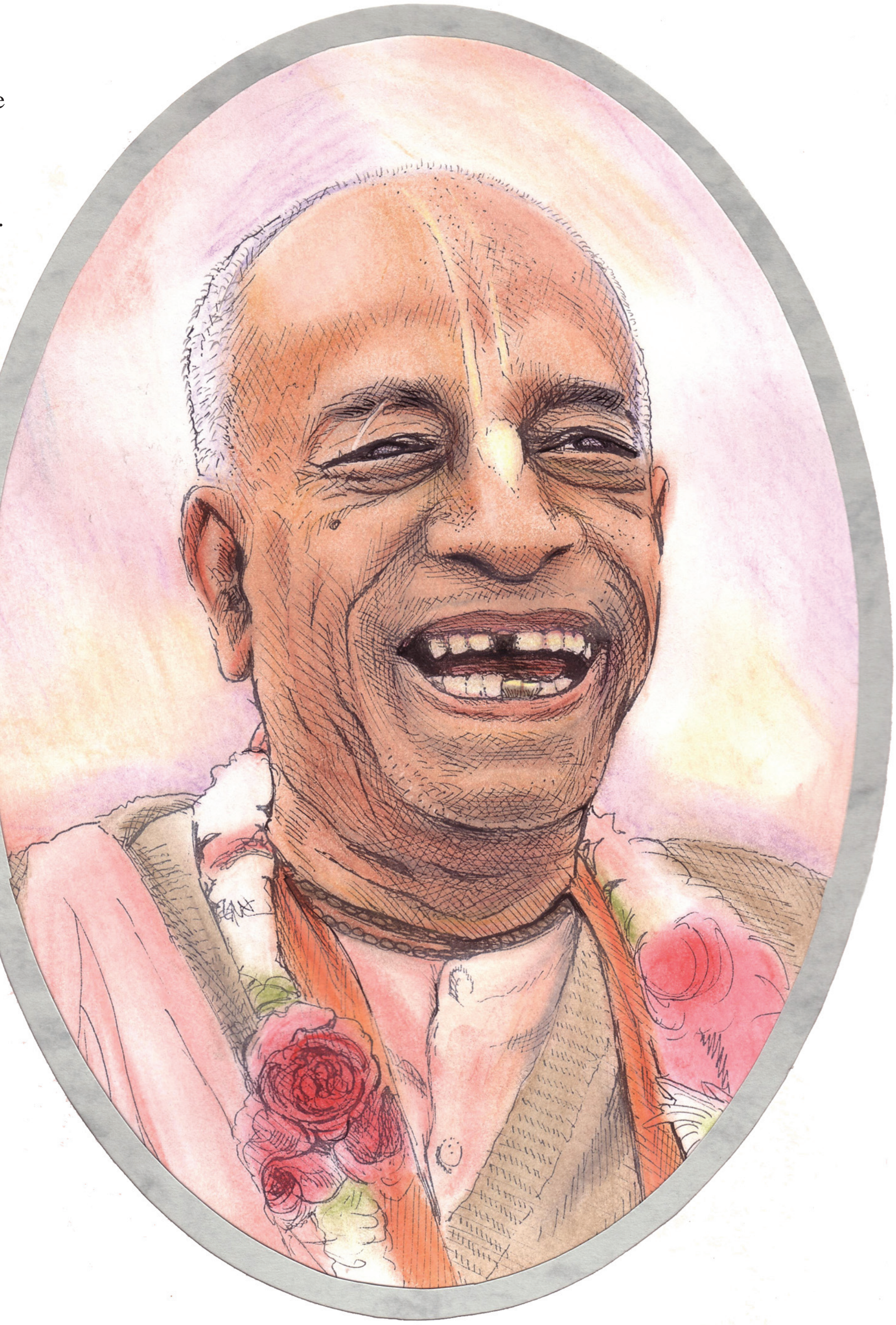
I found the Vedic viewpoint to be much more attractive on all levels. It teaches that God is beyond the influence of time, which is subordinate to Him. He therefore possesses an eternally youthful form of incomparable beauty in every detail, from His fine, curling, bluish black hair, to His radiant toenails, which defeat the luster of the most precious gems. Restless lotus-shaped eyes adorn His splendorous face. Every aspect of His form intrigues the eyes to an insatiable degree. Therefore the name Kṛṣṇa, meaning "the all-attractive," is surely a fitting name for God.

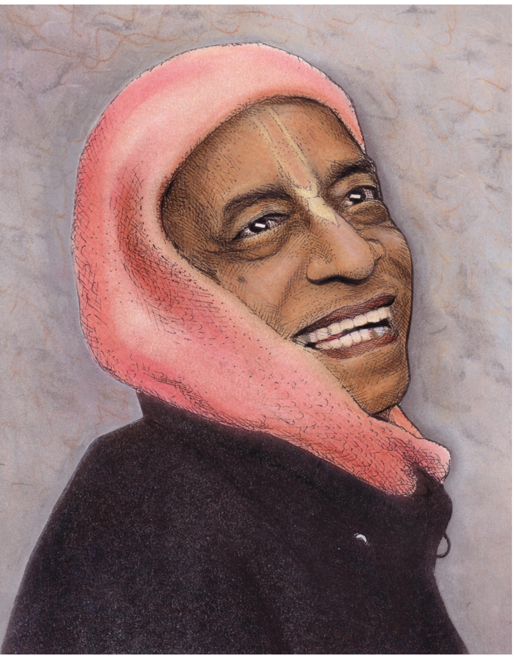
As an artist I am concerned with dimensions. If we examine the dimensions of Kṛṣṇa's divine form as revealed in the Vedic scriptures, we discover that many measurements differ from the human form. The most obvious differences are the size of His head in proportion to His body and that His hands reach to His knees. Indian sculptors who carve temple deities use these dimensions, which are delineated in reference books. The measurements are exact and define divine deity forms, thus setting them apart from any type of human form, although obvious similarities are there.

In the sacred *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.22) Lord Kṛṣṇa says, "But those who always worship Me with exclusive devotion, meditating on My transcendental form—to them I carry what they lack, and I preserve what they have." And in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* Lord Brahmā also assures us, "Only a person whose eyes are smeared with the ointment of love can see the beautiful form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

Although I am unqualified to approach Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda's followers have mercifully engaged me in Kṛṣṇa's service, in particular by depicting Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and writing and illustrating books on the subject. For this blessing I am eternally grateful because a picture of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes provides a view into the spiritual world. Therefore, as an ISKCON artist, I would like to offer the following recommendation: Suspend your disbelief, for with faith and an open mind, an apparent statue comes alive and a picture becomes a window to another world. Imagination and the spirit of devotional service give life to what appears to be the dull matter of this world. Therefore, in this mood let us serve Lord Kṛṣṇa, His devotees, and whomever we can, and be happy forever. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Ananta Śakti Dāsa, initiated in 1979, lives in Borehamwood, England.





Left: Pastel and ink, 1988
Above, right: Pastel and ink, 1989
Above: Pastel and ink, 1990

In your own

What do you like most about ISKCON's Rathayātrā festivals?

What I like most about Rathayātrā

is that it gives nondevotees the wonderful chance to see Their Most Glorious and Beautiful Lordships in person and to see another side of ISKCON and ISKCON devotees. Very often, if you mention Hare Kṛṣṇa to nondevotees they will speak of people in orange or hippy-style clothing they have seen dancing in the street or distributing books. Sometimes the word *cult* or the opinion that we are a minority on the edge of society is mentioned. Rathayātrā shows nondevotees that we are anything but a minority hippy group. ISKCON devotees come from all backgrounds and nations, are normal people from all levels of society, not a cult, and are growing in number every day. That I think is as valuable an experience for nondevotees as seeing their Lordships or hearing the name of Kṛṣṇa.

Channah Mace
London

Rathayātrās give an opportunity

to fallen conditioned souls drowning in this material world to have *darśana* and the blessings of the Lord of the universe and to interact with Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees chanting, dancing, and distributing books and *prasādam.* Seeing devotees immersed and enthusiastically engaged in chanting the holy names of the Lord inspires everyone, be they devotees or first-time attendees.

The Lord comes out of His home and showers His special causeless mercy, giving everyone an opportunity to surrender unto Him and to understand the real mission of this human form of life. The festival gives a glimpse of the visionary mission of Lord Caitanya for spreading the holy names of the Lord in every town and village.

For devotees it's an awesome opportunity to engage in different services to the Lord, such as book distribution, *prasādam* distribution, dramas, and *kīrtanas.* It is a special program designed to cover many activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness as introduced by Śrīla Prabhupāda. It gives a chance to call the Lord of the Universe into the heart of the devotees. It reveals the real bliss and pleasure of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Rāsānanda Dāsa
New Delhi

What I like most

about ISKCON Rathayātrā festivals is that I get a chance to work

Fifth Ave
West

Yamarāja Dāsa

words . . .

Pentip photo: Andrea Leone | Agency: Dreamstime.com

with other temple devotees in the same spirit as a family preparing for a grand wedding. Everyone serves with great enthusiasm and their best effort to please Lord Jagannātha. On festival day the fruit of our labor is manifest when we freely distribute our love for Lord Jagannātha via the media of *prasādam, kīrtana,* art, drama, books, and dance. We share with newcomers, who otherwise would perhaps never receive Lord Jagannātha's mercy in this lifetime.

Śacī Devī Dāsī
Brampton-Mississauga, Ontario
Canada

I like the large gathering of devotees

chanting and singing the glories of Kṛṣṇa. It is great to see people in the street joining the devotees and having fun. The whole town or city where the festival is held seems to be purified by seeing the devotees. It is a very colorful and vibrant festival, and certainly a day to cherish in your life and look forward to every year. All glories to this great festival and all those who take part in it or just watch the parade.

Ravi Singh
London

East 38th St
SLEEPY'S
On Fifth

New York Rathayātrā, 2009

I like the rare opportunity to sweep the path

in front of the *ratha* (cart) carrying Śrī Jagannātha, Śrī Baladeva, and Śrīmatī Subhadrā Devī. By receiving their merciful glance I feel so blissful and very blessed. There is no other occasion when the deities come out in the public to claim the fallen souls by their merciful glance, and therefore it is our good fortune to participate in the Rathayātrā festival. Because most of us are so engrossed in material activities, we should never miss the chance to take part in the ISKCON Rathayātrā. It has a great potency to overcome our karmic reactions.

Vaikuṇṭheśvara Bālājī Dāsa
Austin, Texas

I enjoy being able to express my love

for Lord Jagannātha, Lord Baladeva, and Subhadrā Devī. It is a joyous occasion that brings together devotees from all around the globe. I want everyone in the world to know how much love I feel, and I invite them to join me in feeling only ecstasy.

Indira Shanmugam
Jersey City, New Jersey

The Rathayātrā festivals

of ISKCON enable countless conditioned souls, like myself, to take part in *bhakti-yoga,* devotional service to God. Just by hearing the sweet chanting of Kṛṣṇa's names sung by devotees, seeing the beautiful form of Lord Jagannātha, walking along the procession, pulling the cart, or tasting the delicious vegetarian feast, anyone can very easily make spiritual advancement by the causeless mercy of the Supreme Lord and His devotees.

Of all the transcendental activities included in the Rathayātrā festivals, my favorite is taking part in the lively *kīrtanas.* Glorifying God, Kṛṣṇa, is very purifying. It awakens our natural loving propensity and gives us a taste of the real pleasure for which we all hanker.

Bill Helminger
Kenosha, Wisconsin

My dear friend had nurtured love

for Lord Jagannātha since the early days of ISKCON and would always meditate on His sweet form before going to bed. He loved the painting of Lord Caitanya dancing in ecstasy in front of Lord Jagannātha's *ratha* and would embrace that image and place it in his pocket close to his heart and go to sleep. Once he revealed his heart while showing me one of his most cherished photographs amongst his very few of his initial days in ISKCON. It captured him lost in dancing in front of Lord Jagannātha's *ratha* at his first Rathayātrā in Mumbai, with its

(*please turn to page 38*)

HERE'S THE NEXT QUESTION:

What memorable visit to the temple inspired you in a special way?

Go to Krishna.com/inyourownwords and let us know. Please keep your answer to under 150 words. Replies will appear in our Sep/Oct 2010 issue. Deadline for submissions is June 15.

CONVICTION

Is certainty possible in an age of doubt?

By Ravīndra Svarūpa Dāsa

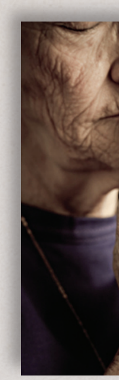
DOUBT IS THE MOTOR of the modern mentality, the indefatigable engine that drives the spirit of our age. Doubt was honored with an early recognition in the essays of the Renaissance courtier Michel de Montaigne: "We are, I know not how, double within ourselves, with the result that we do not believe what we believe, and we cannot rid ourselves of what we condemn."

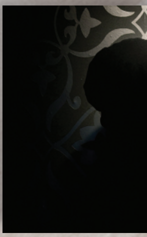
During Montaigne's time, religious wars of unbearable cruelty rent Europe. The absolute certainty of the raging antagonists began to taint conviction itself with bad odor. But Montaigne saw deeper. He decried the doubleness within the very certitude of the religious partisans. He recognized their zeal as a kind of cover up, overcompensation for a hidden, an unacknowledged, lack of faith: "We do not believe what we believe."

In modern times, disbelief has so far entered into the essence of our existence that both faithlessness and faith have become fundamentally two varieties of faithlessness.

It is the secret unbelief of true believers that energizes the armies of the night in Mathew Arnold's 1867 poem "Dover Beach":

> The Sea of Faith
> Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
> Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
> But now I only hear
> Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
>
> And we are here as on a darkling plain
> Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
> Where ignorant armies clash by night.





> "Theistic traditions may have various theories about God and the worshiper, but, so far as I can see, the simplest and soundest explanation for the experienced certitude of advanced practitioners everywhere is found in the understanding of *ātmā*-Paramātmā."

Photos clockwise from upper left: Marcela Barsse, Aldo Murillo, Vikram Raghuvanshi, Andi Berger, Vyacheslav Shramko, hammondovi, Fabio Soldaini, iodrakon, Cristian Lucaci, Kris Hanke, Yamarāja Dāsa, selimaksan, Duncan Walker. (All but Yamarāja Dāsa are © istockphoto.com.) Background: Detail from a painting by Rāmadāsa Abhirāma Dāsa.

William Butler Yeats delivers the ominous news in his prophetic, apocalyptic 1919 poem "The Second Coming":

> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
> The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
> The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
> The best lack all conviction, while the worst
> Are full of passionate intensity.

Others, of course, celebrated unbelief—it bestows liberation—and proselytized it. Leave it to Friedrich Nietzsche to push it as a jagged little pill: "Convictions are more dangerous enemies of truth than lies." (Aphorism 483, *Human, All Too Human,* 1878)

It took half a dozen years in academia for me to recognize that unbelief—skepticism, relativism, nihilism—had itself become dogma.

So it happened that, as a child of the times, and all too human, I swallowed the pill. I served at the altar of doubt. Unbelief became my credo.

It took half a dozen years in academia for me to recognize that unbelief—skepticism, relativism, nihilism—had itself become dogma. Departments of religion were pledging themselves en masse to the hermeneutics of suspicion. To confess any conviction other than mistrust of all convictions was to court anathema.

All joined in choir to hymn unwavering faith in faithlessness. This dogmatism began to rankle me. Something was wrong. I brooded, irritably.

And then, my breakthrough: We doubters were failing at doubt. We had failed to take our doubt far enough. If we are going to be thoroughly skeptical, then we must be also skeptical about our own skepticism. If all things are relative, then so must be our relativism itself.

I stated my case at an informal religion department gathering.

"You must feel like you're walking a tightrope over an abyss," responded a fellow grad student, only recently a nun.

"Yeah, but I'm not sure there's a rope either," I said.

Everyone laughed.

Let us be bold enough to remove the very ground we stand on and miraculously levitate on nothing.

Doubting Our Doubting

And so we come full circle. Doubting our own doubting, we find a surprise awaiting us: a tiny crack opens for the possibility of faith.

Just the possibility. Even less—just the openness to the possibility.

This turns out to be a crack even God can squeeze through.

One thing led to another. Several years after the manifestation of the crack, I joined—to my permanent amazement—a high-demand "organized religion." A religion committed to preaching. Labeled by one academic as "evangelical Hinduism." (For a systematically misleading expression, this is spot on.)

Then came a time, fifteen or twenty years later, when I realized I was utterly and completely certain that, as they say, "God exists." (For a systematically misleading expression, this is spot on.) I did not merely hold that a feasible case for divine existence could be made, that "God exists" can be reasonably affirmed, that the assertion is true with (of course) the possibility that it just might be false. Not at all. I was absolutely, totally certain.

This upset me.

I'm still a modern person. I assailed my own conviction: How could I be so sure? What right did I have to be so certain? How was it possible? How was I entitled to such a degree of certitude? What was wrong with me?

I attacked my own faith, and it repelled my assaults. I couldn't shake it. It was as if it were simply there of its own accord, an irrevocable fact; it really didn't depend upon me.

I put the matter before some judicious devotees.

"It's Kṛṣṇa's causeless mercy," said one.

"It's a gift," said another.

A Ph.D. who once taught Christian theology to divinity students, she cited the distinction between certainty and certitude.

These conversations relieved me of my anxiety and allowed me to accept the gift wholeheartedly.

Yet—not to look the gift horse in the mouth—I found myself still impelled to understand better what I had been given.

A Certain Place to Start

I began my inquiry with this question: Is there anything at all that every person can be absolutely certain of? The question, of course, summoned me back to the origins of modernity, to the very "father of modern philosophy," Rene Descartes, who turned Montaigne's doubt into a methodology. Sweeping away, in his *Discourse on Method,* everything dubitable, he was left with only his own indubitable existence as a cognizant being. He could doubt everything except that he was doubting. *Cogito, ergo sum,* he famously wrote: "I think, therefore I am." Descartes explained that by "thought" he meant "what happens in me such that I am immediately conscious of it, insofar as I am conscious of it."

His own existence as a conscious subject was absolutely certain.

Here I got my own clue and cue: Start, like Descartes, with myself.

But in this, it seemed to me, I was able to be more clear than Descartes. To "start with myself" means, to be precise, to start with *ātmān,* the conscious self.

We commonly use the English "soul" or "spirit soul" to denote the same entity, but without the same clear meaning. The Sanskrit word *ātmān* (in the root form) or *ātmā* (in the nominative singular) is a noun meaning "the self." (The same word also serves as the reflexive pronoun, the "-self" in words denoting myself, yourself, herself, and so on.)

When I take note, as Descartes did, of my own consciousness, I understand that I am aware, at least to some degree, of the *ātmān,* of myself as a conscious, experiencing living being, now bearing and animating a certain material body and mind.

For two decades preceding my own Cartesian investigation, I'd been engaged in spiritual practices amounting to researching of *ātmān.* To try to understand my own certitude about God, I began to reflect upon those practices.

Ātma-tattva, the science of the self, like any science, presents itself first as a theory, a kind of picture or conceptual map, of spiritual reality. A theory, like a map, is the fruit of the experience of previous researchers, prepared as a guide for later explorers. The only purpose of theory is to guide practice, just as a road map is drawn up to assist in a successful automobile journey.

Ātma-tattva also includes practical instructions on how to undertake the spiritual journey, how to use the map correctly. It is, in this way, an applied science dedicated to the clarification and expansion of consciousness.

We do not find any enterprise like this in modern Western philosophy. Modern philosophy certainly speculates endlessly about consciousness and experience, about knowledge and the knower and the known, but it has lost the applied element so prominent in the ancient classical traditions of Pythagoras, Parmenides, and Plato. There is now no distinctive "philosophical way of life." It's just another job.

Applied Knowledge

I had taken up a tradition from India, yet it returned me to the very foundations of Western philosophy. When I recognized this, I felt that I'd come back home.

The applied knowledge, the spiritual way of life, requires a commitment to a relatively rigorous and demanding discipline. This is called yoga. The discipline is required to remove the material veil so that one can attain direct experience of spiritual reality: of the *ātmā,* the self, and of Paramātmā, the Superself, or God.

The necessity for such a disciplined life is stated succinctly in *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.17): spiritual knowledge depends on goodness, on *sattva.* If our awareness is covered by the material modes of passion (*raja-guṇa*) and ignorance (*tamo-guṇa*), we will not be capable of direct perception of *ātmā* and Paramātmā. Therefore, we who undertake this project live a regulated and radically simple life designed to minimize the demands of the senses, to decrease lust, anger, greed, and so on.

Modern materialistic culture fosters values and activities that expand the modes of passion and of ignorance, so it is necessary to insulate oneself from its influence. Spiritual culture has the contrary aim of developing goodness and reducing passion and ignorance.

After several decades of practice in *ātma-tattva,* the science of the self, my own consciousness had become somewhat clarified and expanded. I had gained at least some awareness of my own spiritual identity and, along with that, of God.

A master of yoga named Kavi has stated (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.42) that for one practicing properly, three things develop simultaneously: devotion, direct perception of God, and detachment from everything else. This happens in the same natural way that for a person who is eating, satisfaction, nourishment, and relief from hunger increase together with every bite.

In the yoga discipline, the practitioner realizes his or her own identity as *ātmā* and also encounters God initially as Paramātmā, as the interior, guiding Superself, the self of all selves. In this experience we find the Cartesian key. For knowing God, the Paramātmā, is something like knowing our own self. Thus the experience engenders total certitude in the experiencer. As one cannot doubt one's own consciousness, when that same consciousness has expanded somewhat God becomes

DO YOU LIVE FAR FROM A TEMPLE?

There may be Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees near you who hold regular get-togethers or want to start them. We don't have room for these gatherings on the Centers list we print in the magazine, but our online list includes many of them. To find out if there's a regular Kṛṣṇa conscious program near you, or to list your own, log on to Krishna.com and click on "Address list" under QUICK LINKS on the right side of the home page.

known as I know myself, for God is the very self of my self. Then I can no more doubt God's existence than I can my own.

I can, of course, doubt my experience of objects perceived in this world. It is possible, Descartes noted, that one is being deceived by some evil demon. (Here he anticipated the premise of *The Matrix* by some four centuries.) Even so, one still cannot be deceived about one's own consciousness.

Knowledge of God is not like knowledge of the external world, of this table I write on, of the garden outside my window, of the people relaxing in the garden. In this case, I am spirit knowing matter. There is a far more intimate connection between me and God: Not only are *ātmā* and Paramātmā of the same spiritual nature, but *ātmā* is part of Paramātmā. For this reason, once there is experience of Paramātmā, doubting God becomes impossible. After that expansion of consciousness, God remains part of the content of every experience I have. I experience my own being as part of God's being.

It is not that in this experience, I perceive something novel, like a new next-door neighbor or the latest cool thing from Apple. Rather, with consciousness purified and expanded, I now perceive what has always been there, merely unnoticed, unrecognized, unacknowledged.

In this state of expanded consciousness, I am aware that I cannot see anything without God's first seeing it, hear anything without God's first hearing it, and so on. I cannot doubt God's seeing and hearing anymore than I can my own.

Certitude in Other Traditions

The experience of *ātmā*-Paramātmā, which renders doubting God's existence as impossible as doubting one's own, is evidently not exclusive to my own or historically related traditions. A natural and unwavering certitude concerning God has appeared in advanced practitioners in many theistic traditions. Those traditions may have various theories (theological doctrines) about God and the worshiper, but, so far as I can see, the simplest and soundest explanation for the experienced certitude of advanced practitioners everywhere is found in the understanding of *ātmā*-Paramātmā.

We can also conclude that we are made for belief, for conviction. There is no way around it.

Herein lies the foundation, I propose, for authentic conviction, for conviction arising from the opening up of the self. Without that, we seem condemned to verify Montaigne's observation: "We are, I know not how, double within ourselves." Authentic conviction may serve as antidote to the current global wars between modes of doubleness: militant belief born from despair at its own unbelief clashing with militant unbelief born in denial of its own belief.

Ravīndra Svarūpa Dāsa, an ISKCON guru and governing body commissioner, lives at the Philadelphia temple, where he joined ISKCON in 1971. He holds a Ph.D. in religion from Temple University.

IN YOUR OWN WORDS

(*continued from page 33*)

twists and turns. Later he got initiated as Jagannātha Yātrā Dāsa. Indeed the giant wheel of the *ratha* crushes the nocturnal demons in the heart on its journey through the ocean of mercy—the Vaiṣṇavas!

Saurabh Sharma
Nashik, India

The most lovable thing is the saṅkīrtana

in the streets. Everyone is singing the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and dancing, and it seems like the whole of Baroda is participating. It reminds me of how beautiful it would look when Caitanya Mahāprabhu was leading the Rathayātrā procession in Puri.

Mala Sharma
Baroda, India

ISKCON Rathayātrās are like a complete otherworldly experience

of the transcendental kind. In my thirty years or so of being a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, I have participated in several Rathayātrās in Zurich and Geneva, and lately I've attended two Rathayātrās in Prague, Czech Republic. It is the most transcendental street festival ever to be celebrated in the West—full of colors, fruits, and flowers falling from Lord Jagannātha's cart, thrown to the crowd by first-class *brāhmaṇa* Vaiṣṇavas; blissful chanting and dancing; and all literally pulling together on the same rope. Whoever sees the festival, be he a gentleman or a ruffian, a Christian, Jew, Muslim or Buddhist—not to speak of the countless Vaiṣṇavas throughout the world—all become spiritually healthy, wealthy, and wise. A true blessing for mankind. That is the festival of Jagannātha Rathayātrā.

Jaya Gurudeva Dāsa
Prague, Czech Republic

The Rathayātrā festival is very amazing for me.

At Rathayātrā I saw Lord Jagannātha for the first time. I love to get the chance to pull the Lord of the Universe. All the people get the mercy of Jagannāthajī. They give something to Him from their shops. At this year's Rathayātrā, it seemed to me that Jagannāthajī was smiling more at the end of the procession than at the beginning. And His turban was tilted, as if He was also dancing along with the devotees.

Prajakta Sakhavalkar
Nashik, India

Referred to as “the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature,” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa,* or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

DHRUVA MAHĀRĀJA’S REWARDS

Lord Viṣṇu tells Prince Dhruva what he will receive because of his service and devotion.

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 9

17 सत्याशिषो हि भगवंस्तव पादपद्म-
माशीस्तथानुभजतः पुरुषार्थमूर्तेः
अप्येवमर्य भगवान् परिपाति दीनान्
वाश्रेव वत्सकमनुग्रहकातरोऽस्मान्

satyāśiṣo hi bhagavaṁs tava pāda-padmam
āśīs tathānubhajataḥ puruṣārtha-mūrteḥ
apy evam arya bhagavān paripāti dīnān
vāśreva vatsakam anugraha-kātaro ’smān

satya—real; *āśiṣaḥ*—compared with other benedictions; *hi*—certainly; *bhagavan*—my Lord; *tava*—Your; *pāda-padmam*—lotus feet; *āśīḥ*—benediction; *tathā*—in that way; *anubhajataḥ*—for the devotees; *puruṣa-artha*—of the real goal of life; *mūrteḥ*—the personification; *api*—although; *evam*—thus; *arya*—O Lord; *bhagavān*—the Personality of Godhead; *paripāti*—maintains; *dīnān*—the poor in heart; *vāśrā*—a cow; *iva*—like; *vatsakam*—unto the calf; *anugraha*—to bestow mercy; *kātaraḥ*—eager; *asmān*—upon me.

My Lord, O Supreme Lord, You are the supreme personified form of all benediction. Therefore, for one who abides in Your devotional service with no other desire, worshiping Your lotus feet is better than becoming king and lording it over a kingdom. That is the benediction of worshiping Your lotus feet. To ignorant devotees like me, You are the causelessly merciful maintainer, just like a cow, who takes care of the newly born calf by supplying milk and giving it protection from attack.

PURPORT: Dhruva Mahārāja was cognizant of the defective nature of his own devotional service. ① Pure devotional service is without material form and is not covered by mental speculation or fruitive activities. Pure devotional service is therefore called *ahaitukī,* unmotivated. ② Dhruva Mahārāja knew that he had come to worship the Lord in devotional service with a motive—to get the kingdom of his father. Such an adulterated devotee can never see the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to

(1) Why is pure devotional service called “unmotivated”?
(2) What was Dhruva Mahārāja’s motive in worshiping the Lord?

face. He therefore felt very grateful for the causeless mercy of the Lord. The Lord is so merciful that not only does He fulfill the desires of a devotee who is driven by ignorance and desires for material benefit, but He also gives such a devotee all protection, just as a cow gives milk to a newly born calf. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said that the Lord gives intelligence to the constantly engaged devotee so that he may gradually approach the Lord without difficulty. A devotee must be very sincere in his devotional service; then, although there may be many things wrong on the devotee's part, Kṛṣṇa will guide him and gradually elevate him to the highest position of devotional service.

③ The Lord is addressed herein by Dhruva Mahārāja as *puruṣārtha-mūrti,* the ultimate goal of life. Generally *puruṣārtha* is taken to mean execution of a type of religious principle or worship of God in order to get material benediction. Prayers for material benediction are intended for satisfying the senses. And when one is frustrated and cannot fully satisfy the senses in spite of all endeavor, he desires liberation, or freedom from material existence. These activities are generally called *puruṣārtha.* But actually the ultimate goal is to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is called *pañcama-puruṣārtha,* the ultimate goal of life. Lord Caitanya therefore taught us not to ask from the Supreme Personality any benediction such as material wealth, popularity, or a good wife. One should simply pray to the Lord to be constantly engaged in His transcendental loving service. ④ Dhruva Mahārāja, being cognizant of his desire for material benefit, wanted protection from the Lord so that he might not be misled or deviated from the path of devotional service by material desires.

मैत्रेय उवाच
18 अथाभिष्टुत एवं वै सत्सङ्कल्पेन धीमता
भृत्यानुरक्तो भगवान् प्रतिनन्द्येदमब्रवीत्

maitreya uvāca
athābhiṣṭuta evaṁ vai
sat-saṅkalpena dhīmatā
bhṛtyānurakto bhagavān
pratinandyedam abravīt

maitreyaḥ uvāca—Maitreya said; *atha*—then; *abhiṣṭutaḥ*—being worshiped; *evam*—thus; *vai*—certainly; *sat-saṅkalpena*—by Dhruva Mahārāja, who had only good desires in his heart; *dhī-matā*—because he was very intelligent; *bhṛtya-anuraktaḥ*—very favorably disposed towards devotees; *bhagavān*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *pratinandya*—having congratulated him; *idam*—this; *abravīt*—said.

(3) Dhruva Mahārāja addressed the Lord as *puruṣārtha-mūrti.* What does it mean?
(4) What kind of protection did Dhruva Mahārāja want from the Lord?
(5) Who are Dhruva Mahārāja's father, grandfather, and great-grandfather?

The great sage Maitreya continued: My dear Vidura, when Dhruva Mahārāja, who had good intentions in his heart, finished his prayer, the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, who is very kind to His devotees and servants, congratulated him, speaking as follows.

श्रीभगवानुवाच
19 वेदाहं ते व्यवसितं हृदि राजन्यबालक
तत्प्रयच्छामि भद्रं ते दुरापमपि सुव्रत

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
vedāhaṁ te vyavasitaṁ
hṛdi rājanya-bālaka
tat prayacchāmi bhadraṁ te
durāpam api suvrata

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the Personality of Godhead said; *veda*—know; *aham*—I; *te*—your; *vyavasitam*—determination; *hṛdi*—within the heart; *rājanya-bālaka*—O son of the King; *tat*—that; *prayacchāmi*—I shall give you; *bhadram*—all good fortune; *te*—unto you; *durāpam*—although it is very difficult to obtain; *api*—in spite of; *su-vrata*—one who has taken a pious vow.

The Personality of Godhead said: My dear Dhruva, son of the King, you have executed pious vows, and I also know the desire within your heart. Although your desire is very ambitious and very difficult to fulfill, I shall favor you with its fulfillment. All good fortune unto you.

PURPORT: The Lord is so merciful to His devotee that He immediately said to Dhruva Mahārāja, "Let there be all good fortune for you." The fact is that Dhruva Mahārāja was very much afraid in his mind, for he had aspired after material benefit in discharging his devotional service and this was hampering him from reaching the stage of love of God. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.44) it is said, *bhogaiśvarya-prasaktānām:* those who are addicted to material pleasure cannot be attracted to devotional service. It was true that at heart Dhruva Mahārāja wanted a kingdom that would be far better than Brahmaloka. This was a natural desire for a *kṣatriya.* He was also only five years old, and in his childish way he desired to have a kingdom far greater than his father's, grandfather's or great-grandfather's. ⑤ His father, Uttānapāda, was the son of Manu, and Manu was the son of Lord Brahmā. Dhruva wanted to excel all these great family members. The Lord knew Dhruva Mahārāja's childish ambition, but how was it possible to offer Dhruva a position more exalted than Lord Brahmā's?

The Lord assured Dhruva Mahārāja that Dhruva would not be bereft of the Lord's love. He encouraged Dhruva not to be worried that he childishly had material desires and at the same time had the pure aspiration to be a great devotee. Generally, the Lord does not award a pure devotee material opulence, even though he may desire it. But Dhruva Mahārāja's case was different. ⑥ The Lord knew that he was such a great devotee that in spite of having material opulence he would never be deviated from love of God. This example illustrates that a highly qualified devotee can have the facility of material enjoyment and at the same time execute love of God. This, however, was a special case for Dhruva Mahārāja.

20 नान्यैरधिष्ठितं भद्र यद्भ्राजिष्णु ध्रुवक्षिति
यत्र ग्रहर्क्षताराणां ज्योतिषां चक्रमाहितम्
21 मेढ्यां गोचक्रवत्स्थास्नु परस्तात्कल्पवासिनाम्
धर्मोऽग्निः कश्यपः शुक्रो मुनयो ये वनौकसः
चरन्ति दक्षिणीकृत्य भ्रमन्तो यत्सतारकाः

nānyair adhiṣṭhitaṁ bhadra
yad bhrājiṣṇu dhruva-kṣiti
yatra graharkṣa-tārāṇāṁ
jyotiṣāṁ cakram āhitam
meḍhyāṁ go-cakravat sthāsnu
parastāt kalpa-vāsinām
dharmo 'gniḥ kaśyapaḥ śukro
munayo ye vanaukasaḥ
caranti dakṣiṇī-kṛtya
bhramanto yat satārakāḥ

na—never; *anyaiḥ*—by others; *adhiṣṭhitam*—was ruled; *bhadra*—My good boy; *yat*—which; *bhrājiṣṇu*—brightly glowing; *dhruva-kṣiti*—the land known as Dhruvaloka; *yatra*—where; *graha*—planets; *ṛkṣa*—constellations; *tārāṇām*—and stars; *jyotiṣām*—by luminaries; *cakram*—encirclement; *āhitam*—is done; *meḍhyām*—around a central pole; *go*—of bulls; *cakra*—a multitude; *vat*—like; *sthāsnu*—stationary; *parastāt*—beyond; *kalpa*—a day of Brahmā (millennium); *vāsinām*—those who live; *dharmaḥ*—Dharma; *agniḥ*—Agni; *kaśyapaḥ*—Kaśyapa; *śukraḥ*—Śukra; *munayaḥ*—great sages; *ye*—all of them who; *vana-okasaḥ*—living in the forest; *caranti*—move; *dakṣiṇī-kṛtya*—keeping it to their right; *bhramantaḥ*—circumambulating; *yat*—which planet; *satārakāḥ*—with all the stars.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead continued: My dear Dhruva, I shall award you the glowing planet known as the polestar, which will continue to exist even after the dissolution at the end of the millennium. No one has ever ruled this planet, which is surrounded by all the solar systems, planets, and stars. All the luminaries in the sky circumambulate this planet, just as bulls tread around a central pole for the purpose of crushing grains. Keeping the polestar to their right, all the stars inhabited by the great sages like Dharma, Agni, Kaśyapa, and Śukra circumambulate this planet, which continues to exist even after the dissolution of all others.

PURPORT: Although the polestar existed before its occupation by Dhruva Mahārāja, it had no predominating deity. Dhruvaloka, our polestar, is the center for all other stars and solar systems, for all of them circle around Dhruvaloka just as a bull crushes grains by walking around and around a central pole. Dhruva wanted the best of all planets, and although it was a childish prayer, the Lord satisfied his demand. A small child may demand something from his father which his father has never given to anyone else, yet out of affection the father offers it to the child; similarly, this unique planet, Dhruvaloka, was offered to Mahārāja Dhruva. ⑦ The specific significance of this planet is that until the entire universe is annihilated this planet will remain, even during the devastation which takes place during the night of Lord Brahmā. ⑧ There are two kinds of dissolutions, one during the night of Lord Brahmā and one at the end of Lord Brahmā's life. At the end of Brahmā's life, selected personalities go back home, back to Godhead. Dhruva Mahārāja is one of them. The Lord assured Dhruva that he would exist beyond the partial dissolution of this universe. ⑨ Thus at the end of the complete dissolution, Dhruva Mahārāja would go directly to Vaikuṇṭhaloka, to a spiritual planet in the spiritual sky. ⑩ Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments in this connection that Dhruvaloka is one of the *lokas* like Śvetadvīpa, Mathurā, and Dvārakā. They are all eternal places in the kingdom of Godhead, which is described in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (*tad dhāma paramam*) and in the *Vedas* (*oṁ tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ*). The words *parastāt kalpa-vāsinām,* "transcendental to the planets inhabited after the dissolution," refer to the Vaikuṇṭha planets. In other words, Dhruva Mahārāja's promotion to the Vaikuṇṭhalokas was guaranteed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

22 प्रस्थिते तु वनं पित्रा दत्त्वा गां धर्मसंश्रयः
षट्त्रिंशद्वर्षसाहस्रं रक्षिताव्याहतेन्द्रियः

prasthite tu vanaṁ pitrā
dattvā gāṁ dharma-saṁśrayaḥ

(6) Why was the Lord willing to give Dhruva Mahārāja material opulence?
(7) What is the specific significance of Dhruvaloka?
(8) When do the two dissolutions take place?
(9) What is Dhruva Mahārāja's destination at the time of the complete dissolution?
(10) What is the nature of *lokas* like Śvetadvīpa, Mathurā, and Dvārakā?

ṣaṭ-triṁśad-varṣa-sāhasraṁ
rakṣitāvyāhatendriyaḥ

prasthite—after departure; *tu*—but; *vanam*—to the forest; *pitrā*—by your father; *dattvā*—awarding; *gām*—the whole world; *dharma-saṁśrayaḥ*—under the protection of piety; *ṣaṭ-triṁśat*—thirty-six; *varṣa*—years; *sāhasram*—one thousand; *rakṣitā*—you will rule; *avyāhata*—without decay; *indriyaḥ*—the power of the senses.

After your father goes to the forest and awards you the rule of his kingdom, you will rule continuously the entire world for thirty-six thousand years, and all your senses will continue to be as strong as they are now. You will never become old.

PURPORT: In the Satya-yuga people generally lived for one hundred thousand years. ⑪ Dhruva Mahārāja's ruling the world for thirty-six thousand years was quite possible in those days.

23 त्वद्भ्रातर्युत्तमे नष्टे मृगयायां तु तन्मनाः
अन्वेषन्ती वनं माता दावाग्निं सा प्रवेक्ष्यति

tvad-bhrātary uttame naṣṭe
mṛgayāyāṁ tu tan-manāḥ
anveṣantī vanaṁ mātā
dāvāgniṁ sā pravekṣyati

tvat—your; *bhrātari*—brother; *uttame*—Uttama; *naṣṭe*—being killed; *mṛgayāyām*—in hunting; *tu*—then; *tat-manāḥ*—being too afflicted; *anveṣantī*—while searching out; *vanam*—in the forest; *mātā*—the mother; *dāva-agnim*—in the forest fire; *sā*—she; *pravekṣyati*—will enter.

The Lord continued: Sometime in the future your brother, Uttama, will go hunting in the forest, and while absorbed in hunting, he will be killed. Your stepmother, Suruci, being maddened upon the death of her son, will go to search him out in the forest, but she will be devoured by a forest fire.

PURPORT: Dhruva Mahārāja came to the forest to search out the Supreme Personality of Godhead with a revenging spirit against his stepmother. His stepmother had insulted Dhruva, who was not an ordinary person, but a great Vaiṣṇava. An offense at the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava is the greatest offense in this world. ⑫ Because of having insulted Dhruva Mahārāja, Suruci would become mad upon the death of her son and would enter a forest fire, and thus her life would be ended. This was specifically mentioned by the Lord to Dhruva because he was determined for revenge against her. From this we should take the lesson that we should never try to insult a Vaiṣṇava. Not only should we not insult a Vaiṣṇava, but we should not insult anyone unnecessarily. When Suruci insulted Dhruva Mahārāja, he was just a child. She of course did not know that Dhruva was a great recognized Vaiṣṇava, and so her offense was committed unknowingly. When one serves a Vaiṣṇava unknowingly, one still gets the good result, and if one unknowingly insults a Vaiṣṇava, one suffers the bad result. A Vaiṣṇava is especially favored by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Pleasing him or displeasing him directly affects the pleasure and displeasure of the Supreme Lord. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, in his eight stanzas of prayer to the spiritual master, has sung, *yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādaḥ:* by pleasing the spiritual master, who is a pure Vaiṣṇava, one pleases the Personality of Godhead, but if one displeases the spiritual master one does not know where he is going.

(11) How long would Dhruva Mahārāja rule the world?
(12) What would be Suruci's fate for having offended Dhruva Mahārāja?

24 इष्ट्वा मां यज्ञहृदयं यज्ञैः पुष्कलदक्षिणैः
भुक्त्वा चेहाशिषः सत्या अन्ते मां संस्मरिष्यसि

iṣṭvā māṁ yajña-hṛdayaṁ
yajñaiḥ puṣkala-dakṣiṇaiḥ
bhuktvā cehāśiṣaḥ satyā
ante māṁ saṁsmariṣyasi

iṣṭvā—after worshiping; *mām*—Me; *yajña-hṛdayam*—the heart of all sacrifices; *yajñaiḥ*—by great sacrifices; *puṣkala-dakṣiṇaiḥ*—comprehending distribution of great charities; *bhuktvā*—after enjoying; *ca*—also; *iha*—within this world; *āśiṣaḥ*—blessings; *satyāḥ*—true; *ante*—at the end; *mām*—Me; *saṁsmariṣyasi*—you will be able to remember.

The Lord continued: I am the heart of all sacrifices. You will be able to perform many great sacrifices and also give great charities. In this way you will be able to enjoy the blessings of material happiness in this life, and at the time of your death you will be able to remember Me.

[*Continued in the next issue.*]

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

“Surrendering to Kṛṣṇa is Real Intelligence”

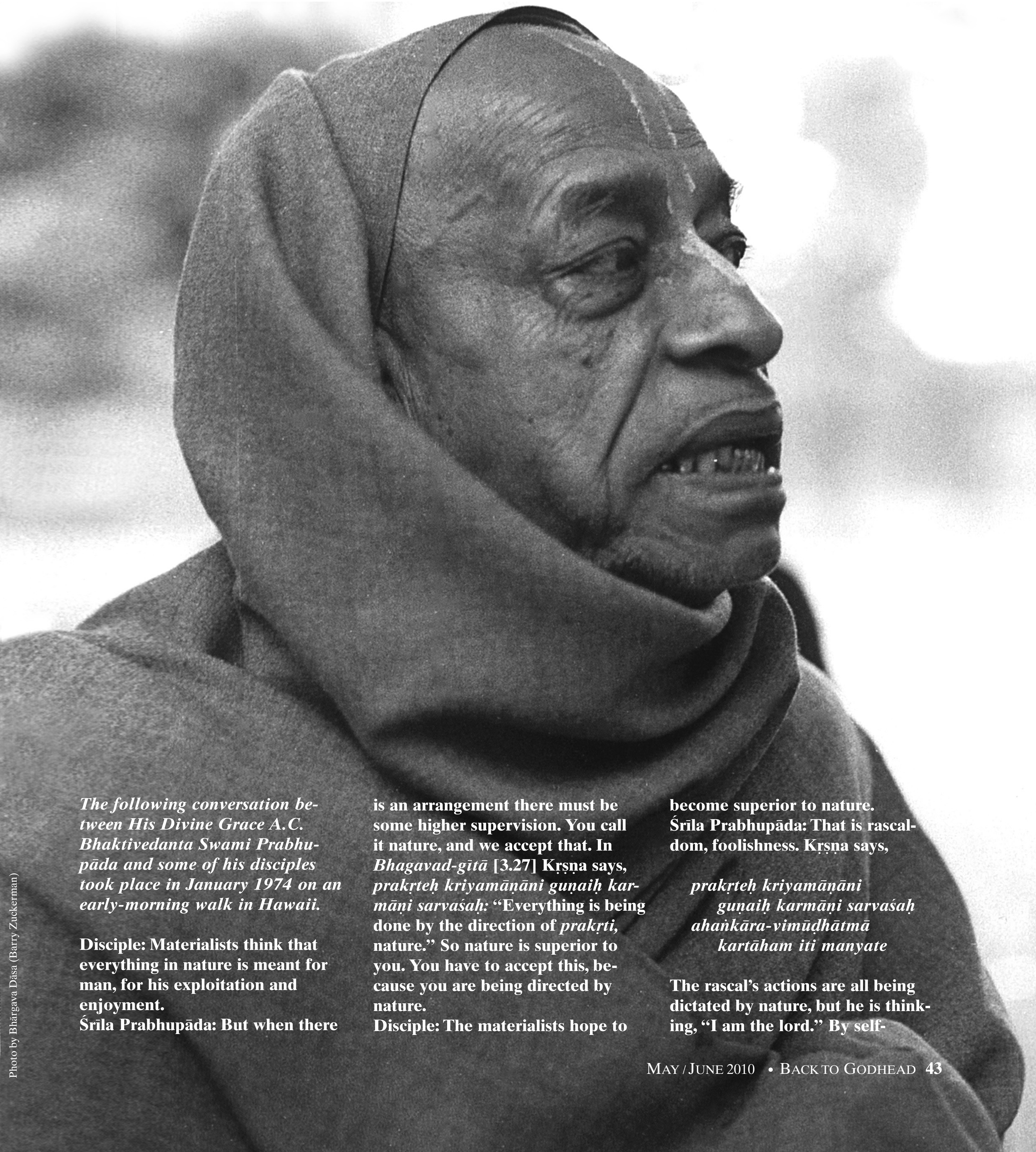


Photo by Bhārgava Dāsa (Barry Zuckerman)

The following conversation between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place in January 1974 on an early-morning walk in Hawaii.

Disciple: Materialists think that everything in nature is meant for man, for his exploitation and enjoyment.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But when there is an arrangement there must be some higher supervision. You call it nature, and we accept that. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [3.27] Kṛṣṇa says, *prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ:* “Everything is being done by the direction of *prakṛti,* nature.” So nature is superior to you. You have to accept this, because you are being directed by nature.

Disciple: The materialists hope to become superior to nature.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is rascaldom, foolishness. Kṛṣṇa says,

> *prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni*
> *guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ*
> *ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā*
> *kartāham iti manyate*

The rascal’s actions are all being dictated by nature, but he is thinking, “I am the lord.” By selfconceit, he's falsely thinking, "I am controlling nature" or "I shall be able to control nature in the future." This is foolishness. This is rascaldom.

Disciple: The scientists can give so much evidence that they have already achieved partial control over nature. Now we can fly all over the world?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Partial control means no control. We are controlled by nature; that you cannot deny. Now, the next question should be. How is nature working? That Kṛṣṇa also explains in *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.10]: *mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram.* "The material nature is working under My supervision." To a small degree, we are also supervising material nature. For example, here is some earth. We can take this earth and make it into bricks and build a skyscraper. It is not that the earth is going to become a skyscraper by itself. A living entity must utilize the earth to build the skyscraper. Another example is an airplane. It is simply a combination of various kinds of matter, but it has to be worked out by the manufacturer and flown by the pilot. Therefore the pilot of the airplane, or the manufacturer, is superior to the airplane itself.

Our position is that we are controlled by the material nature, and the material nature is controlled by Kṛṣṇa.

Now, the elements of material nature (earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence, and ego) are working together so nicely, just like a big machine, that anyone can see they are being manipulated by some living entity. And that entity is God, or Kṛṣṇa. So our position is that we are controlled by the material nature, and the material nature is controlled by Kṛṣṇa. One who is at all sensible will think, "After all, the Supreme Controller is Kṛṣṇa, so why not directly come under His control? Why not serve Him directly?" This is good sense.

Disciple: The difference between Kṛṣṇa's control and that of the material nature seems to be that Kṛṣṇa is benevolent but the material nature is not.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Material nature is just like a jail superintendent. If you don't care for the laws of the government, the laws of God, then you'll be controlled by the jail superintendent. That's all. You will be controlled; you cannot be free. This is your constitutional position.

Disciple: We have the choice of being controlled either by love or by force.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. When we decide to be controlled by Kṛṣṇa, it is out of love for Him. Similarly, you are being controlled by me, but there is no force. You serve me voluntarily, out of love. I am not paying you; still, when I ask you to do something you immediately do it. Why? There is love between us.

Disciple: If a person actually understands the distinction between control by Kṛṣṇa and control by the material nature, is it possible that he will still choose to be controlled by the material nature?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. He has already made that choice. But he's so foolish that he thinks, "I am now independent of the Supreme Lord." Because he's foolish he cannot understand that he is simply being controlled by an agent of God, the material nature. Although he is controlled at every moment, he is thinking, "I am free." Therefore he is in illusion. Illusion means believing something that is not a fact. So the materialists and so-called scientists who are thinking, "There is no God; we are independent" are simply foolish, childish rascals. That is why Kṛṣṇa uses the word *vimūḍhātmā* to describe them. *Vimūḍhātmā* means "befooled rascal."

Disciple: Most people don't think life in the material nature is so bad. They think it's pleasurable. They think they're having fun.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. That is another illusion. Unless one thinks material life is pleasurable, how could he tolerate it? When we see a pig eating stool, we say, "Ughhh!" But unless the pig thinks, "This is pleasurable," how could he eat stool? He is eating the most abominable thing, but he is thinking, "I am enjoying." This is *māyā,* illusion.

Disciple: Sometimes when we tell people this life is full of miseries, they say, "What do you mean?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is their foolishness. They cannot distinguish misery from happiness. They are being kicked by material nature, the agent of Kṛṣṇa. Because they are desiring in various ways to become controllers or enjoyers, they are being offered various types of bodies and suffering repeated birth and death. But because people have no sense, they think this material life is pleasurable. Now, as Americans, you may have so many nice facilities, but you cannot enjoy them. By nature's force you have to change your position. What can you do? Today you may be living in a nice apartment on the twenty-fourth floor of a skyscraper, and tomorrow you may become a rat in that apartment. It is not in your power to change the laws of nature.

Actually, everyone is being controlled by the material nature at every moment. So an intelligent person asks how to get out of this material nature, how to end the suffering of repeated birth, old age, disease, and death. And Kṛṣṇa explains how to end this suffering in *Bhagavad-gītā* [7.14]: *māṁ eva ye prapadyante māyām etāṁ taranti te:* "As soon as the rascal surrenders to Me, he is out of the control of My material nature." Surrendering to Kṛṣṇa is real intelligence.

IN MEMORIAM

His Holiness Mahāviṣṇu Goswami

This article originally appeared in ISKCON News, *the news agency of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and was made available to BTG by special arrangement. For more news about ISKCON, please visit news.iskcon.com.*

HIS HOLINESS Mahāviṣṇu Goswami passed away at the Bhaktivedanta Hospital in Mumbai, India, on January 25. He was ninety-one years old and ISKCON's oldest *sannyāsī.* He had suffered from ill health for the past several years and was admitted to the hospital after a lung infection was discovered in late December.

Back then, after suffering from fever and intense asthmatic attacks, he had already begun preparing for the end by leaving for Nashik, a holy city in Maharashtra where he was raised and in which Lord Rāma enacted many of His pastimes. However, after some peaceful days there, during which his fever abated and his breathing improved, Mahāviṣṇu Goswami suddenly began to experience sharp, convulsive pains in both legs. His disciples consulted with Bhaktivedanta Hospital doctors and returned him to the Mumbai hospital early on the morning of January 17.

Unafraid to Die

Remarkably, Mahāviṣṇu Goswami seemed completely undisturbed by his imminent passing.

"I have purchased the ticket and am on the platform waiting for the train," he said. "When it comes, I will simply board. I am ready. We all must be ready when that train comes."

"Those who are afraid to die, they die," he added. "Those who are unafraid to die, they never die—they live through the platform of devotional service."

Famous for conducting Bhāgavata Saptāhas, during which he lectured on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* for six nonstop hours each day for seven days, His Holiness was known for his deep love of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Disciples say that in his last days, despite being rendered dazed and drowsy by prescribed painkillers, his level of spiritual consciousness continued to be astounding.

"Every day, we would perform the *maṅgala-ārati* ceremony and recite *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* at Guru Mahārāja's bedside," says disciple and personal secretary Devakīnandana Dāsa. "Sometimes he would be deep asleep, yet when we came to a particular verse, he'd suddenly open his eyes, smile, and remark, 'Oh, this is a nice verse, Devakī,' and repeat it aloud, before dropping off to sleep again as if nothing had happened. Often while he slept we would see his tongue moving rhythmically as if he was chanting, and when he awoke in extreme pain, his first words were always 'Hare Kṛṣṇa' or 'Rāma Rāma.'"

This absorption in Kṛṣṇa consciousness remained until Mahāviṣṇu Goswami's very last moments.

"Many devotees were present chanting *kīrtana,*" says close friend Kavicandra Swami. "His eyes became clear as he looked around at everyone. He uttered the holy name and then left. It was the perfect end to a glorious life."

Mahāviṣṇu Goswami's body was transported to his beloved Nasik, where a *samādhi* (mausoleum) will be built for him.

While the disciples Mahāviṣṇu Goswami has left behind are undoubtedly aggrieved by their guru's passing, he had been carefully preparing them for this moment for some time—and, of course, they take comfort in the knowledge that he is now with his Lord.

A Vaiṣṇava from Birth

Devotees across the globe will remember Mahāviṣṇu Goswami as a dedicated and powerful spiritual teacher who completed twelve world tours after accepting *sannyāsa,* the renounced order of life, in 1991 at the age of 71.

He was born into a family who had been Vaiṣṇavas for eight generations, and was highly educated, with M.A. degrees in English and Sanskrit and a fluency in those languages as well as Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, and Urdu.

In recent years he established a beautiful ISKCON temple in Dwarka and a community in Rajkot, Gujarat, where a grand new temple is currently being built.

Despite his advanced age, frail health, and hectic preaching tours, Mahāviṣṇu Goswami was always humble and accessible to everyone—he even insisted on washing his own clothes and cooking his own meals during his last years. Kind, loving, and supportive, he was a spiritual father figure for many devotees around the world.

"We were fortunate to have such a soul among us, and I pray that I can follow in his footsteps," says Kavicandra Swami.

Explaining the appropriate sentiments to be expressed when a great devotee passes away, he quotes Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava guru Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī upon the departure of his father and spiritual guide Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura: "Today is one of great happiness and not the slightest grief. Today our master has reentered the eternal pastimes of the Lord. Now it is our duty to remember his eternal position, name, qualities, form, and pastimes. Henceforth we will follow in his footsteps with even greater concentration."

—*Madhava Smullen,* ISKCON News

In the Lap of
MOTHER NATURE

Amid fields, cows, rivers, and mountains, the author finds himself closer to God.

Text and photos
by Vaṁśī Vihārī Dāsa

GOD IS OUR supreme father, and one of His energies, nature, is our mother. A mother nourishes her child with the milk from her body, and she also sees to the overall development of her child by imparting proper culture and education. Similarly Mother Nature cares for her innumerable children by providing grains, fruits, flowers, and medicinal herbs, and she showers her motherly affection on us by

Left: *Now, our next program will be to organize farming land to set an example to the world how people can be peaceful, happy, and free from all anxieties simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa* mahā-mantra *and living an honorable life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (Letter, October 19, 1975)*

Above: *All the living entities within the universe are conducted by the Vedic directions, as a bull is directed by the rope attached to its nose. No one can violate the rules laid down in the Vedic literatures. To the chief person, who has contributed the Vedas, we offer our respect!* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *3.15.8)*

Top: *Kṛṣṇa's navel resembles a lotus, He is garlanded with lotuses, and His eyes are also compared to the petals of a lotus* (ālola-candraka-lasad-vanamālya-vaṁśī)*. So if we simply think of only this one verse, which describes Kṛṣṇa's body with reference to the lotus, we can meditate our whole life on how beautiful Kṛṣṇa is, how wise Kṛṣṇa is, and how Kṛṣṇa manifests His creation. This is meditation—thinking of Kṛṣṇa.* (Teachings of Queen Kuntī, *Chapter 5)* giving invaluable lessons, guiding us on the journey of life.

During one rainy season, I got an opportunity to stay at a small village named Galtare, 120 km north of Mumbai, India. I've had some attraction for rural life since childhood, and upon spending some time in the countryside, I could understand why Śrīla Prabhupāda quoted the English poet Cowper: "God made the country, and man made the town." I could see how the materialistic civilization prevalent in cities makes us godless. In the city, not seeing the hand of God in any aspect of life becomes natural. It is so easy to believe that industry and

Gopa Kiśora Dāsa

Opposite page: *Human beings need not eat animals. There are ample food grains, milk, fruit, and vegetables so that the human beings as well as the animals can eat sumptuously and to their heart's content. If all living beings are satisfied with food and shelter and obey the prescribed rules, there cannot be any disturbance between one living being and another. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *1.4.12, Purport)*

Above: *Cow dung dried in the sunshine is kept in stock for utilizing as fuel in the villages. They get wheat and other cereals produced from the field. There is milk and vegetables, and the fuel is cow dung, and thus they are independent in every village. There are hand weavers for the cloth. And the country oil-mill (consisting of a bull walking in circle round two big grinding stones, attached with yoke) grinds the oil seeds into oil. The whole idea is that . . . the less we are anxious for maintaining our body and soul together, the more we become favorable for advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (Letter, June 14, 1968)*

Top: *We find that in* Bhagavad-gītā *Lord Kṛṣṇa advises* go-rakṣya, *the protection of cows. This is essential because if cows are cared for properly they will surely supply sufficient milk. We have practical experience in America that in our various ISKCON farms we are giving proper protection to the cows and receiving more than enough milk. In other farms the cows do not deliver as much milk as in our farms; because our cows know very well that we are not going to kill them, they are happy, and they give ample milk. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *9.15.25, Purport)*

the Internet fulfill our needs. Packaged foods give us the sense that machines have manufactured them. Life goes on uninterrupted even if no rain falls for many years. But in the village, one can experience God closely. There life is absolutely dependent on agriculture, which depends on rain, and rain depends on God.

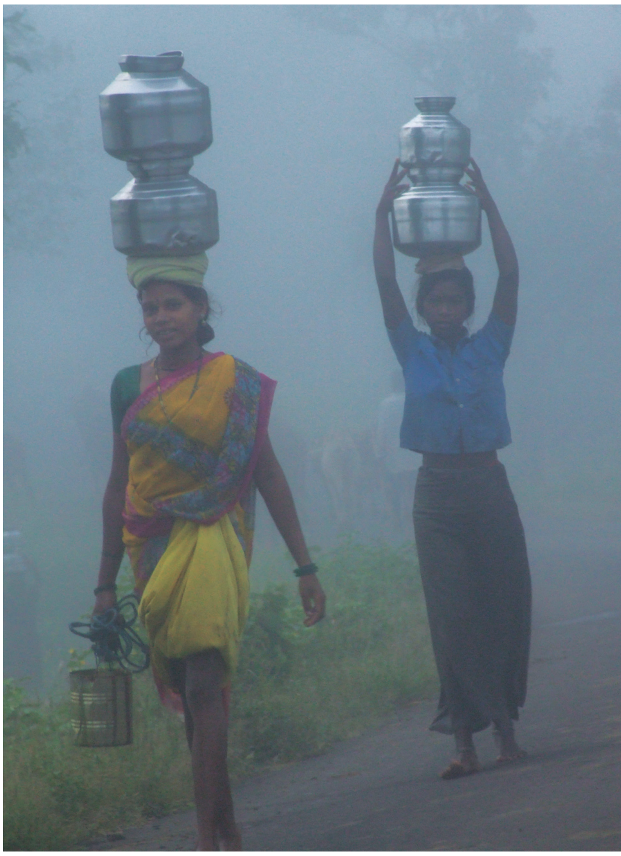
When we're close to nature, the intoxication of the materialistic way of life gradually starts fading away. In my experience, the knowledge enunciated in *Bhagavad-gītā, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* and Śrīla Prabhupāda's purports becomes clearer.

The chirping of the birds, the symphony of the running stream, the mooing of the cows, and the sound of the swift breeze provide inexplicable happiness to the ears. Seeing the unlimited blue sky above, the thousands of stars at night, the giant

Below: *"Stick to your own place and grow your food. There is no question of transport. A little transport is required, the bullock cart. Kṛṣṇa was being carried on a bullock cart. There is no use of petrol. Simply use the bull. They are already there. Utilize them." (Morning Walk, Rome, May 25, 1974)*

"They are simply misusing their advancement, and they are satisfied when they have got a motorcar instead of bullock cart. That's all. They think, 'Now I am advanced. We had bullock carts, and now we have got motorcars with three hundred thousand parts. And every part will give me trouble.' And that is advancement." (Morning Walk, October 1–3, 1972, Los Angeles)

Above and right: *When there is a river, one can take drinking water, wash his clothes, bathe and so on, for that water will serve all purposes. Similarly, if one worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, all his goals will be achieved. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā *14.66, Purport)*



Above: *"In India, the women go to draw water from the well and they keep the waterpot on their head. They are going, but the head is so balanced that the waterpot will never fall down. If you learn how to keep the balance, in spite of your movement the waterpot on the head will not fall. Similarly, if you mold your life in such a way that Kṛṣṇa should always be remembered, then in spite of your mind being very agitated, your mind will be fixed up in Kṛṣṇa. That is required." (Lecture on* Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *6.2.12–14, Allahabad Kumbha Mela, January 17, 1971)*

mountains, the stretch of the green fields below swaying in the wind, and the love of a mother cow for her little calf is total perfection for the eyes. The mystical aroma of the soil, the scent of clear pollution-free air, the smell of freshly bloomed flowers, and the fragrance of cow dung deeply purify the sense of smell. The joy of touching soil, cows, green plants, and clear river water

Right: *When the flame in a lamp burns the wick improperly, the lamp is blackened, but when the lamp is filled with ghee and is burning properly, there is bright illumination. Similarly, when the mind is absorbed in material sense gratification, it causes suffering, and when detached from material sense gratification, it brings about the original brightness of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *5.11.8)*

Left and right: *The cow's calf not only is beautiful to look at, but also gives satisfaction to the cow, and so she delivers as much milk as possible. But in the Kali-yuga, the calves are separated from the cows as early as possible for purposes which may not be mentioned in these pages of* Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. *(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *1.17.3, Purport)* seems to reach even our souls. And the taste of fresh fruits, vegetables, grains, water, and pure cow milk impels us to think how the artificial ways of modern life give us untainted miseries in the name of happiness.

While living in the countryside, I tried to visualize Śrīla Prabhu-

Right: *"Just like the trees, plants, grass. They cannot move. They have no legs. They have got legs, but they cannot move. They are eating through the legs. Therefore they are called* pāda-pa, *which means 'collecting water through the leg.' These trees are drinking water from within the earth with their legs. Therefore they push their roots very deep to find out where is water. . . . This is God's creation. We have to understand that." (Lecture on* Bhagavad-gītā *13.4, Miami, February 27, 1975)*

Above: *"We have to follow. If we follow the footprints of great personalities, then there is no danger.* Mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ. *Just like in the villages there is a track. One who follows that track is not lost. Similarly, if we follow the track of the* mahājana*—on which a great personality has traversed—then we'll not fall." (Lecture on* Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *7.9.10, Montreal, July 9, 1968)*

pāda's priceless teachings. And I reaped satisfaction of the soul and enhanced faith. Understanding our supreme father becomes easy when our mother, nature, gives us personal lessons as she holds us in her loving embrace. In these pages, I have presented a few of the numerous teachings that Mother Nature helped plainly illustrate for me during my stay at Galtare.

Vaṁśī Vihārī Dāsa, a disciple of His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami, has a graduate degree in commerce. For the past eleven years, he has been serving on the staff of the Hindi edition of BTG.

Above: *The web is created by the spider, and it is maintained by the spider, and as soon as the spider likes, the whole thing is wound up within the spider. The spider is covered within the web. If an insignificant spider is so powerful as to act according to its will, why can't the Supreme Being act by His supreme will in the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the cosmic manifestations? (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *2.9.28, Purport)*

Left: *"Just like the cow and bull. The bull helps, plowing. That is the original system. Now they have invented tractors, and the bulls are being killed. Why should they be killed? Engage them in tilling the field. They will have an occupation. And the men also will have an occupation. There is immense land. So there will be no question of unemployment." (Conversation, Melbourne, July 2, 1974)*

According to smṛti *regulation, the cow is the mother and the bull the father of the human being. The cow is the mother because just as one sucks the breast of one's mother, human society takes cow's milk. Similarly, the bull is the father of human society because the father earns for the children just as the bull tills the ground to produce food grains. Human society will kill its spirit of life by killing the father and the mother. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam *3.2.29, Purport)*

CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Māyāpur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. For the exact dates for your area, go to ***www.krishnadays.com****.*

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

April 15–May 14

(*Month of Puruṣottama*)

25—Padminī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

MAY

10—Vañjulī Mahā-dvādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans for Paramā Ekādaśī.

Month of Madhusūdana (continued)

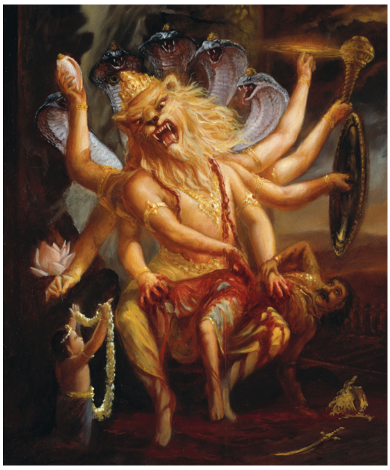
16—Beginning of Candana Yātrā, the festival of anointing the temple deity with sandalwood pulp for twenty-one days.

22—Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Sītā Devī, the consort of Lord Rāmacandra. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Devī, the consort of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Madhu Paṇḍita, a great devotee of Lord Caitanya.

24—Mohinī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

25—Rukmiṇī Dvādaśī, the appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī Devī, the consort of Lord Kṛṣṇa as Dvārakādhīśa, the Lord of Dvārakā.

26—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayānanda Prabhu, a dedicated disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda who helped him bring the Rathayātrā festival to the Western world.



Painting by Jaya Rāma Dāsa

Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva

27—Nṛsiṁha Caturdaśī, appearance anniversary of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva, Lord Kṛṣṇa's half-man, half-lion incarnation. Fasting till dusk, followed by feasting. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, a follower of the six Gosvāmīs. Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, the spiritual master of Lord Caitanya's spiritual master (Īśvara Purī).

May 28–June 26

(*Month of Trivikrama*)

JUNE

2—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya, an intimate associate of Lord Caitanya.

8—Aparā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

9—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, author of *Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata,* a biography on Lord Caitanya.

21—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, a prominent spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* (disciplic succession), and the author of *Govinda-bhāṣya,* an important commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra.* Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Gaṅgāmātā Gosvāminī, a prominent woman spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya.*

22—Pāṇḍava Nirjalā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

June 27–July 26

(*Month of Vāmana*)

27—Disappearance of Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita, one of the principal followers of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

JULY

7—Disappearance anniversary of Śrī Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya.

8—Yoginī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

11—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Gadādhara Paṇḍita, one of the principal associates of Lord Caitanya. Also, disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Fasting till noon, then feasting.

12—Guṇḍicā-mārjana: festival of cleansing the Gundicha temple in Jagannatha Puri, India.

13—Lord Jagannātha's Rathayātrā in Jagannatha Puri. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrīla Śivānanda Sena, intimate associates of Lord Caitanya.

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Udhampur, J&K — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Srila Prabhupada Marg, Srila Prabhupada Nagar 182 101/ Tel. (1992) 270298/ info@iskconudhampur.com
Ujjain, MP — 35–37 Hare Krishna Land, Bharatpuri, 456 010/ Tel. (734) 2535000 or 2531000, or 9300969016/ Fax: (734) 2536000/ iskcon.ujjain@pamho.net
Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat — Opp. B&B Polytechnic, Mota Bazaar, Ananda, 388 120/ Tel. (2692) 230796 or 233012/ iskcon.vvnagar@pamho.net
Varanasi, UP — ISKCON, B 27/80 Durgakund Rd., Near Durgakund Police Station, Varanasi 221 010/ Tel. (542) 246422 or 222617
Vellore, TN — Chennai Ext. Centre, 10–12, 10th East Cross Road, Gandhi Nagar, 632 006
Vijayawada, AP — Venkatapalem Karakatta Rd., Undavalli Village, Tadepalli Mandaal, Vijayawada, Dist. Guntur 522 501/ Tel. (8645) 272513/ mmdasiskconvijayawada@gmail.com
Visakhapatnam, AP — Hare Krishna Land, Sagaranagar 530 045 (mail: ISKCON, D. No. 7-5-108, Pandurangapuram Beach Rd., 530 003)/ Tel. (891)2528376 or 6537625/ samba.jps@pamho.net; Guesthouse: guesthouse.vizag@pamho.net
◆ **Vrindavan, UP —** Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Dist. Mathura, 281 124/ Tel. & Fax: (565) 2540728/ iskcon.vrindavan@pamho.net; (Guesthouse: Tel. (565) 2540022; ramamani@sancharnet.in)
Warangal, AP — Mulugu Rd., Ayappa Pidipally, 506 007/ Tel. (8712) 426182
Yamunanagar, Haryana — ISKCON Hare Krishna Dham, Hare Krishna Marg, Raghunathpuri, Yamunanagar 135001/ Tel. (1732) 321001 or (mobile) 09355330775/ vishu_bakshi05@yahoo.co.in

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Ahmedabad District, Gujarat (Hare Krishna Farm) — Katwada (contact ISKCON Ahmedabad)
Assam — Karnamadhu, Dist. Karimganj
Chamorshi, Maharashtra — 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadhachiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (218) 623473
Hyderabad, AP (New Naimisaranya Farm) — P.O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., Dist. R.R., 501 401/ Tel. (40) 65520070 or 9440057263/ naimisaranya@pamho.net

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Many temples have their own websites, which you can find at our online directory: http://directory.krishna.com. Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91). For information on international calling, go to www.howtocallabroad.com. ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining

Centers Around the World

Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir) — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (731) 572794
Mayapur, WB — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
Puri, Orissa — ISKCON, Bhaktivedanta Ashram, Sipasirubuli, 752 001/ Tel. (6752) 230494
Surat, Gujarat — Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd. Gangapur, P. O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (2622) 63546
Vrindavan, UP — Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Kolkata, WB — Govinda's, ISKCON House, 22 Gurusaday Rd., 700 019/ Tel. (33) 24756922 or 24749009
Surat, Gujarat — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura 395005/ Tel. (261) 2765891 or 2765516/ surat@pamho.net

CANADA

Brampton-Mississauga, Ontario — Unit 20, 1030 Kamato Dr., L4W 4B6/ Tel. (416) 840-6587 or (905) 826-1290/ iskconbrampton@gmail.com
Calgary, Alberta — 313 Fourth St. N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ Fax: (403) 547-0795/ vamanstones@shaw.ca
Edmonton, Alberta — 9353 35th Ave. NW, T6E 5R5/ Tel. (780) 439-9999/ harekrishna.edmonton@gmail.com
Montreal, Quebec — 1626 Pie IX Blvd., H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/ iskconmontreal@gmail.com
◆ **Ottawa, Ontario** — 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ Fax: (613) 565-2575/ iskconottawa@sympatico.ca
Regina, Saskatchewan — 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-0002 or -6461/ jagadishadas@yahoo.com
Toronto, Ontario — 243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ Fax: (416) 922-1021/ toronto@pamho.net
Vancouver, B.C. — 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728/ Fax: (604) 648-8715; Govinda's Bookstore & Cafe: (604) 433-7100 or (888) 433-8722/ akrura@krishna.com

RURAL COMMUNITY

Ashcroft, B.C. — Saranagati Dhama, Venables Valley (mail: P. O. Box 99, V0K 1A0)/ Tel. (250) 457-7438/ Fax: (250) 453-9306/ iskconsaranagati@hotmail.com

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Baltimore, Maryland — 200 Bloomsbury Ave., Catonsville, 21228/ Tel. (410) 719-1776/ Fax: (410) 799-0642/ info@baltimorekrishna.com
Berkeley, California — 2334 Stuart St., 94705/ Tel. (510) 649-8619/ Fax: (510) 665-9366
Boise, Idaho — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ boise_temple@yahoo.com
Boston, Massachusetts — 72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/ Fax: (617) 909-5181/ darukrishna@iskconboston.org
Chicago, Illinois — 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ Fax: (773) 973-0526/ chicagoiskcon@yahoo.com
Columbus, Ohio — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ Fax: (614) 294-0545
◆ **Dallas, Texas** — 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ Fax: (214) 823-7264/ txkrishnas@aol.com; restaurant: vegetariantaste@aol.com
◆ **Denver, Colorado** — 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052
Detroit, Michigan — 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ gaurangi108@hotmail.com
Gainesville, Florida — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ Fax: (352) 379-2927/ kalakantha.acbsp@pamho.net
Hartford, Connecticut — 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/ pyari@sbcglobal.net
◆ **Honolulu, Hawaii** — 51 Coelho Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-4913/ rama108@bigfoot.com
Houston, Texas — 1320 W. 34th St., 77018/ Tel. (713) 686-4482/ Fax: (713) 956-9968/ management@iskconhouston.org
Kansas City, Missouri — 5201 Paseo Blvd., 64110/ Tel. (816) 924-5619/ Fax: (816) 924-5640/ rvc@rvc.edu
Laguna Beach, California — 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (949) 494-7029/ info@lagunatemple.com
Las Vegas, Nevada — Govinda's Center of Vedic India, 6380 S. Eastern Ave., Suite 8, 89120/ Tel. (702) 434-8332/ info@govindascenter.com
◆ **Los Angeles, California** — 3764 Watseka Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ Fax: (310) 839-2715/ membership@harekrishnala.com
◆ **Miami, Florida** — 3220 Virginia St., 33133 (mail: 3109 Grand Ave., #491, Coconut Grove, FL 33133)/ Tel. (305) 442-7218/ devotionalservice@iskcon-miami.org
New Orleans, Louisiana — 2936 Esplanade Ave., 70119/ Tel. (504) 304-0032 (office) or (504) 638-1944 (temple)/ gopal211@aol.com
◆ **New York, New York** — 305 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn, 11217/ Tel. (718) 855-6714/ Fax: (718) 875-6127/ ramabhadra@aol.com
New York, New York — 26 Second Ave., 10003/ Tel. (212) 253-6182/ krishnanyc@gmail.com
Orlando, Florida — 2651 Rouse Rd., 32817/ Tel. (407) 257-3865
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania — 41 West Allens Ln., 19119/ Tel. (215) 247-4600/ Fax: (215) 247-8702/ iskconphilly@aol.com
◆ **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** — 1408 South St., 19146/ Tel. (215) 985-9303/ savecows@aol.com
Phoenix, Arizona — 100 S. Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (480) 705-4900/ Fax: (480) 705-4901/ svgd108@yahoo.com
Portland, Oregon — 3766 SE Division, 97202/ Tel. (503) 236-6734; info@iskconportland.com
St. Augustine, Florida — 3001 First St., 32084/ Tel. & fax: (904) 819-0221/ vasudeva108@gmail.com
◆ **St. Louis, Missouri** — 3926 Lindell Blvd., 63108/ Tel. (314) 535-8085 or 534-1708/ Fax: (314) 535-0672/ iskcon.stl@pamho.net
San Antonio, Texas — 6772 Oxford Trace, 78240/ Tel. (210) 401-6576/ aadasa@gmail.com
◆ **San Diego, California** — 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach, 92109/ Tel. (858) 483-2500 or 272-8263/ Fax: (858) 483-0941/ krishna.sandiego@gmail.com
San Jose, California — 951 S. Bascom Ave., 95128/ Tel. (408) 293-4959/ iskconsanjose@yahoo.com
Seattle, Washington — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish, 98075/ Tel. (425) 246-8436/ Fax: (425) 868-8928/ info@vedicculturalcenter.org
◆ **Spanish Fork, Utah** — Krishna Temple Project & KHQN Radio, 8628 S. State Rd., 84660/ Tel. (801) 798-3559/ Fax: (810) 798-9121/ carudas@earthlink.net
Tallahassee, Florida — 1323 Nylic St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 224-3803/ darudb@hotmail.com
Towaco, New Jersey — 100 Jacksonville Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 109), 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/ newjersey@iskcon.net
◆ **Tucson, Arizona** — 711 E. Blacklidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ Fax: (520) 791-0906/ tucphx@cs.com
Washington, D.C. — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ Fax: (301) 299-5025/ ad@pamho.net

RURAL COMMUNITIES

◆ **Alachua, Florida (New Raman Reti)** — 17306 N.W. 112th Blvd., 32615 (mail: P.O. Box 819, 32616)/ Tel. (386) 462-2017/ Fax: (386) 462-2641/ alachuatemple@gmail.com
Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) — 31492 Anner Rd., 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ talavan@hughes.net
Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo (mail: HC-01, Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ Tel. (787) 367-3530 or (787) 737-1722/ manonath@gmail.com
Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka) — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ bkgoswami@earthlink.net
◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban)** — R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ Fax: (304) 845-0023/ mail@newvrindaban.com
Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — 532 Murari Ln., 37359 (mail: P.O. Box 108, Lynchburg, TN 37352)/ Tel. (931) 227-6156/ Tel. & fax: (931) 759-6888/ murari_sevaka@yahoo.com
Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — 534 Gita Nagari Rd., 17082/ Tel. (717) 527-4101/ kaulinidasi@hotmail.com
Sandy Ridge, North Carolina — Prabhupada Village, 1283 Prabhupada Rd., 27046/ Tel. (336) 593-9888/ madanmohanmohini@yahoo.com

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Hato Rey, Puerto Rico — Tamal Krishna's Veggie Garden, 131 Eleanor Roosevelt, 00918/ Tel. (787) 754-6959/ Fax: (787) 756-7769/ tkveggiegarden@aol.com
Seattle, Washington — My Sweet Lord, 5521 University Way, 98105/ Tel. (425) 643-4664

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

Belfast, Northern Ireland — Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Ln., BT17 OHE/ Tel. +44 (28) 9062 0530
Birmingham, England — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (121) 420 4999/ birmingham@iskcon.org.uk
Cardiff, Wales — The Soul Centre, 116 Cowbridge Rd., East Canton CF11 9DX/ Tel. +44 (29) 2039 0391/ the.soul.centre@pamho.net
Coventry, England — Kingfield Rd., Coventry (mail: 19 Gloucester St., Coventry CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (24) 7655 2822 or 5420/ haridas.kds@pamho.net
◆ **Dublin, Ireland** — 83 Middle Abbey St., Dublin 1/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ dublin@krishna.ie; Govinda's: info@govindas.ie
Leicester, England — 21 Thoresby St., North Evington, LE5 4GU/ Tel. +44 (116) 276 2587/ pradyumna.jas@pamho.net
Lesmahagow, Scotland — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (1555) 894790/ Fax: +44 (1555) 894526/ karunabhavan@aol.com
◆ **London, England (city)** — 10 Soho St., W1D 3DL/ Tel. +44 (20) 7437-3662; residential /pujaris, 7439-3606; shop, 7287-0269; Govinda's Restaurant, 7437-4928/ Fax: +44 (20) 7439-1127/ london@pamho.net
◆ **London, England (country)** — Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Ln., Watford, Herts, WD25 8EZ/ Tel. +44 (1923) 851000/ Fax: +44 (1923) 851006/ info@krishnatemple.com; (for accommodations:) bmguesthouse@krishna.com
London, England (south) — 42 Enmore Rd., South Norwood, SE25 5NG/ Tel. +44 7988857530/ krishnaprema89@hotmail.com
London, England (Kings Cross) — 102 Caledonian Rd., Kings Cross, Islington, N1 9DN/ Tel. +44 (20) 7168 5732/ foodforalluk@aol.com
Manchester, England — 20 Mayfield Rd., Whalley Range, M16 8FT/ Tel. +44 (161) 226 4416/ contact@iskconmanchester.com
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England — 304 Westgate Rd., NE4 6AR/ Tel. +44 (191) 272 1911
◆ **Swansea, Wales** — 8 Craddock St., SA1 3EN/ Tel. +44 (1792) 468469/ iskcon.swansea@pamho.net; restaurant: govin–das@hotmail.com

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London, England — (contact Bhaktivedanta Manor: Krishna conscious programs are held regularly in more than forty other cities in the U.K. For information, contact ISKCON Reader Services, P. O. Box 730, Watford WD25 8EZ, UK; www.iskcon.org.uk)
Upper Lough Erne, Northern Ireland — Govindadwipa Dhama, Inisrath Island, Derrylin, Co. Fermanagh, BT92 9GN/ Tel. +44 (28) 6772 1512/ govindadwipa@pamho.net

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Dublin, Ireland — Govinda's, 4 Aungier St., Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (1) 475 0309/ Fax: (1) 478 6204/ info@govindas.ie
Dublin, Ireland — Govinda's, 18 Merrion Row, Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ praghosa.sdg@pamho.net

AUSTRALASIA

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide — 25 Le Hunte St. (mail: P.O. Box 114, Kilburn, SA 5084)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (8) 8359-5120/ iskconsa@tpg.com.au
Brisbane — 95 Bank Rd., Graceville (mail: P.O. Box 83, Indooroopilly), QLD 4068/ Tel. +61 (7) 3379-5455/ Fax: +61 (7) 3379-5880
Canberra — 44 Limestone Ave., Ainslie, ACT 2602 (mail: P.O. Box 1411, Canberra, ACT 2601)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (2) 6262-6208

CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

Melbourne — 197 Danks St. (mail: P.O. Box 125), Albert Park, VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (3) 9699-5122/ Fax: +61 (3) 9690-4093/ melbourne@pamho.net
Newcastle — 28 Bull St., Mayfield, NSW 2304/ Tel. +61 (2) 4967-7000/ iskcon_newcastle@yahoo.com.au
Perth — 155–159 Canning Rd., Kalamunda (mail: P.O. Box 201 Kalamunda 6076)/ Tel. +61 (8) 6293-1519/ perth@pamho.net
Sydney — 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9959-4558/ Fax: +61 (2) 9957-1893/ admin@iskcon.com.au
Sydney — Govinda's Yoga and Meditation Centre, 112 Darlinghurst Rd., Darlinghurst NSW 2010 (mail: P.O. Box 174, Kings Cross 1340)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9380-5162/ Fax: +61 (2) 9360-1736/ sita@govindas.com.au

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Bambra, VIC (New Nandagram) — 50 Seaches Outlet, off 1265 Winchelsea Deans Marsh Rd., Bambra VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (3) 5288-7383
Cessnock, NSW (New Gokula) — Lewis Lane (off Mount View Rd., Millfield, near Cessnock [mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock, NSW 2325])/ Tel. +61 (2) 4998-1800/ Fax: +61 (2) 9957-1893/ iskconfarm@mac.com
Murwillumbah, NSW (New Govardhana) — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella (mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. +61 (2) 6672-6579/ Fax: +61 (2) 6672-5498/ ajita@in.com.au

RESTAURANTS

Brisbane — Govinda's, 99 Elizabeth St., 1st floor, QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (7) 3210-0255
Brisbane — Krishna's Cafe, 1st Floor, 82 Vulture St., West End, QLD 4000/ brisbane@pamho.net
Burleigh Heads — Govinda's, 20 James St., Burleigh Heads, QLD 4220/ Tel. +61 (7) 5607-0782/ ajita@in.com.au
Cairns — Gaura Nitai's, 55 Spence St., Cairns, QLD/ Tel. +61 (7) 4031-2255 or (425) 725 901/ Fax: +61 (7) 4031 2256
Maroochydore — Govinda's Vegetarian Cafe, 2/7 First Ave., QLD 4558/ Tel. +61 (7) 5451-0299
Melbourne — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-2939
Melbourne — Gopal's, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-1578

NEW ZEALAND AND FIJI

Christchurch, NZ — 83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 25-190)/ Tel. +64 (3) 366-5174/ Fax: +64 (3) 366-1965/ iskconchch@clear.net.nz
Hamilton, NZ — 188 Maui St., RD 8, Te Rapa/ Tel. +64 (7) 850-5108/ rmaster@wave.co.nz
Labasa, Fiji — Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912
Lautoka, Fiji — 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 6664112/ regprakash@excite.com
Nausori, Fiji — Hare Krishna Cultural Centre, 2nd Floor, Shop & Save Building, 11 Gulam Nadi St., Nausori Town (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs., Suva)/ Tel. +679 9969748 or 3475097/ Fax : +679 3477436/ vdas@frca.org.fj
Rakiraki, Fiji — Rewasa (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243
Suva, Fiji — 166 Brewster Street (mail: P.O. Box 4229, Samabula)/ Tel. +679 3318441/ Fax: +679 3100016/ iskconsuva@connect.com.fj
Wellington, NZ — 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands/ Tel. +64 (4) 478-4108/ info@iskconwellington.org.nz
Wellington, NZ — Gaura Yoga Centre, 1st Floor, 175 Vivian Street (mail: P.O. Box 6271, Marion Square)/Tel. +64 (4) 801-5500/ yoga@gaurayoga.co.nz

RURAL COMMUNITY

Auckland, NZ (New Varshan) — Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course (mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu)/ Tel. +64 (9) 412-8075/ Fax: +64 (9) 412-7130

RESTAURANT

Wellington, NZ — Higher Taste Hare Krishna Restaurant, Old Bank Arcade, Ground Floor, Corner Customnhouse, Quay & Hunter Street, Wellington/ Tel. +64 (4) 472-2233/ Fax: 4) 472-2234/ highertaste@wellington.org.nz

EUROPE (partial list)

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Barcelona — Plaza Reial 12, Entlo 2, 08002/ Tel. +34 93 302-5194/ templobcn@hotmail.com
Bergamo, Italy — Villaggio Hare Krishna (da Medolago strada per Terno d'Isola), 24040 Chignolo d'Isola (BG)/ Tel. +39 (035) 4940706/ villagio.hare.krsna@hare.krsna.it
Budapest — III. Lehel Street 15–17 (Csillaghedy), 1039 Budapest/ Tel. +36 (1) 391-0435/ Fax: (1) 397-5219/ nai@pamho.net
Copenhagen — Skjulhoj Alle 44, 2720 Vanlose, Copenhagen/ Tel. +45 4828 6446/ Fax: +45 4828 7331/ iskcon.denmark@pamho.net
Grödinge, Sweden — Radha-Krishna Temple, Korsnäs Gård, 14792 Grödinge/ Tel. +46 (8) 53029800/ Fax: +46 (8) 53025062 / bmd@pamho.net
Helsinki — Ruoholahdenkatu 24 D (III krs) 00180/ Tel. +358 (9) 694-9879 or -9837/ Email: harekrishna@harekrishna.fi
◆ **Lisbon —** Rua Dona Estefãnia, 91 R/C 1000 Lisboa/ Tel. & fax: +351(1) 314-0314 or 352-0038
Madrid — Espíritu Santo 19, 28004 Madrid/ Tel. +34 91 521-3096
Oslo — Roahagan 1D, Oslo 0754/ Tel. +47 (22) 062266/ gaurahari.sdha@pamho.net;
Paris — 230 Avenue de la Division Leclerc, 95200 Sarcelles Village/ Tel. +33 (1) 39886780 or (6) 629643898/ paris@pamho.net
Prague — Jilova 290, Prague 5 - Zlicin 155 21/ Tel. +420 (2) 5795-0391/ info@harekrsna.cz
◆ **Radhadesh, Belgium —** Chateau de Petite Somme, 6940 Septon-Durbuy/ Tel. +32 (086) 322926 (restaurant: 321421)/ Fax: +32 (086) 322929/ radhadesh@pamho.net
◆ **Rome —** Govinda Centro Hare Krsna, via di Santa Maria del Pianto 16, 00186/ Tel. +39 (6) 68891540/ govinda.roma@harekrsna.it
◆ **Stockholm —** Fridhemsgatan 22, 11240/ Tel. +46 (08) 654-9002/ Fax: +46 (8) 650-881; Restaurant: Tel. & fax: +46 (8) 654-9004/ lokanatha@hotmail.com
Warsaw — Mysiadlo k. Warszawy, 05-500 Piaseczno, ul. Zakret 11/ Tel. +48 (22) 750-7797 or -8247/ Fax: +48 (22) 750-8249/ kryszna@post.pl
Zürich — Bergstrasse 54, 8032/ Tel. +41 (044) 262 33 88/ Fax: +41 (044) 262 31 14/ kgs@pamho.net

RURAL COMMUNITIES

France (La Nouvelle Mayapura) — Domaine d'Oublaisse, 36360, Lucay le Mâle/ Tel. +33 (2) 5440-2395/ Fax: +33 (2) 5440-2823
Germany (Simhachalam) — Zielberg 20, 94118 Jandelsbrunn/ Tel. +49 (8583) 316/ info@simhachalam.de
Hungary (New Vraja-dhama) — Krisna-völgy, 8699 Somogyvamos, Fö u, 38/ Tel. & fax: +36 (85) 540-002 or 340-185/ info@krisnavolgy.hu
Italy (Villa Vrindavan) — Via Scopeti 108, 50026 San Casciano in Val di Pesa (FL)/ Tel. +39 (55) 820054/ Fax: +39 (55) 828470/ isvaripriya@libero.it
Spain (New Vraja Mandala) — (Santa Clara) Brihuega, Guadalajara/ Tel. +34 949 280436

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

Barcelona — Restaurante Govinda, Plaza de la Villa de Madrid 4–5, 08002/ Tel. +34 (93) 318-7729
Cologne, Germany — Govindam, Roonstrasse 3, 50674 Köln
Locarno, Switzerland — Govinda Restaurant, Via Della Motta 10, Locarno 6600/ Tel. +41 (91) 7523852 or 796260804/ radhakanta@pamho.net
Milan — Govinda's, Via Valpetrosa 5, 20123/ Tel. +39 (2) 862417
Oslo — Krishna's Cuisine, Kirkeveien 59B, 0364/ Tel. +47 (2) 260-6250
Paris — L'arbre à Souhaits de Govinda, 18 rue Caroline, 75017/ Tel. 0142935539

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FROM THE EDITOR

Debt Relief

THESE DAYS, ADVERTISEMENTS for debt relief are everywhere. Some debt may be okay; it's part of living in a modern economy. The problem is, a lot of people get buried in debt—mortgages, medical bills, car loans, credit cards. When you're paying off credits cards with credit cards, maybe you need some help.

The Vedic scriptures say we're all in debt as soon as we're born. We enter a world filled with things we can use, and we owe someone for them. From birth we're indebted to, among others, sages, demigods, plants, animals, family members, and society in general.

The sages give us knowledge, most importantly spiritual guidance passed down through the centuries. They provide higher goals for humanity, delivered through scriptures just waiting for us to use as soon as we are able and willing.

The demigods are higher beings who control everything in the universe under Kṛṣṇa's supervision. We enjoy the benefits of the sun, moon, wind, and rain. The demigods supply all the products of nature, including our own bodies.

Animals like cows and goats give us nourishment in the form of milk and its numerous byproducts. People keep pets because they derive some benefit from them, and wild animals like birds create an enjoyable atmosphere to lift our spirits. Trees give us shade, shelter, beauty, and the oxygen we need to survive.

Our family members provide love, care, education, companionship, and financial assistance, sometimes accepting great sacrifice for our benefit. Reciprocation in the form of respect for parents has long been an essential part of any moral society.

Besides moral traditions, an organized society provides many benefits that are absent when anarchy prevails. We don't need to create the social structure we're born into. It's there waiting for us, the result of the work of others, including our ancestors, to whom we're also indebted for family traditions and other kinds of heritage.

A principle of Vedic culture is to acknowledge and reciprocate the contributions of others. People—that is, conscious living beings in various forms—fill and run the universe. From here on Earth and from out of the heavens, they provide everything we need to live in this world and pursue the ultimate purpose of our existence: loving union with Kṛṣṇa.

How do we relieve the debts we owe to so many?

The Vedic scriptures tell us how to repay specific debts as well as how to get full debt relief. We can repay the demigods by performing sacrifices described in the scriptures, our ancestors by getting married and carrying on the family line, and the sages by taking advantage of their wisdom.

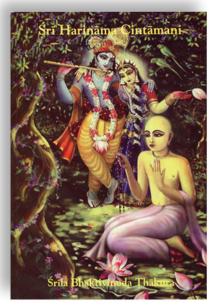
But there's a simpler way to repay everyone and at the same time fulfill our purpose as human beings. We can consolidate our debts and liquidate them all by devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, the supplier to all other suppliers.

"One who has given up all material duties and has taken full shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda [Kṛṣṇa], who offers shelter to all," says the great sage Nārada, "is not indebted to the demigods, great sages, ordinary living beings, relatives, friends, mankind, or even one's forefathers who have passed away."

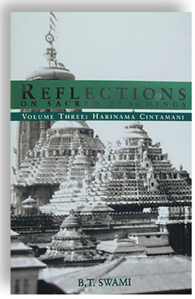
Because all living beings are part of Kṛṣṇa, pure devotional service to Him is the one payment that repays everyone else.

—*Nāgarāja Dāsa*

Aids to Chanting


Śrī Harināma Cintāmaṇi
Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Śrī Harināma Cintāmaṇi—By Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. An in-depth look at the glories of the holy name of the Lord, the benefits of chanting, avoiding offenses, and more. Using the format of a conversation between Lord Caitanya and Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written an extremely valuable guide for anyone serious about purely chanting the holy name. Softbound, 84 pages, 5½" x 8½". **$7.95** S2BS735


REFLECTIONS ON SACRED TEACHINGS
VOLUME THREE: HARINAMA CINTAMANI
B.T. SWAMI

Reflections on Sacred Teachings, Vol. 3: Harināma Cintāmaṇi—By Bhakti Tīrtha Swami. The most basic practice for members of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement is the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. Bhakti Tīrtha Swami's exposition of *Harināma Cintāmaṇi* adds substantially to the theological and practical understanding of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Softbound, 295 pages, 5½" x 8½". **$14.95** H2BS334

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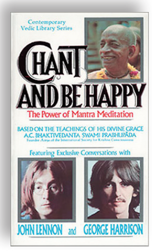
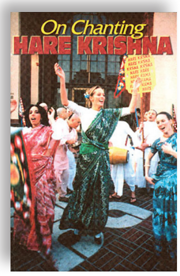

CHANT AND BE HAPPY
The Power of Mantra Meditation
JOHN LENNON and GEORGE HARRISON

On Chanting Hare Krishna—By Śrīla Prabhupāda. A great pamphlet to give to the public, it includes Śrīla Prabhupāda's talk on chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and a brief history of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Softbound, 21 pages, 5½" x 8½". **$1.25** BLBS259


On Chanting
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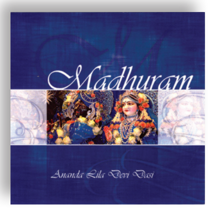
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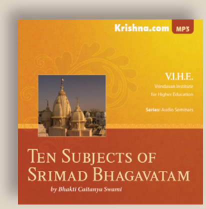
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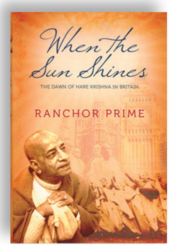
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Ranchor Prime

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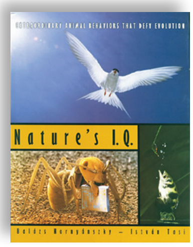

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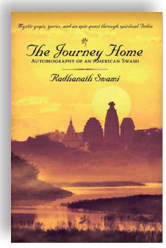
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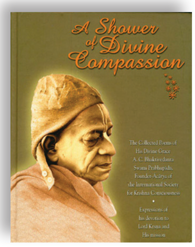
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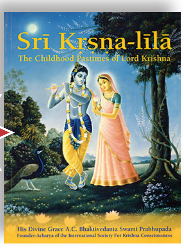
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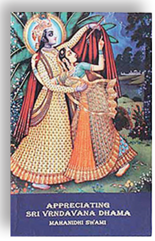
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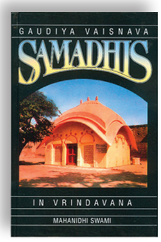
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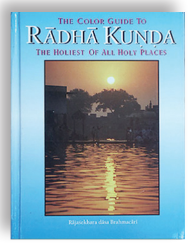
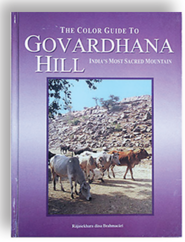

THE COLOR GUIDE TO
RĀDHĀ KUṆḌA
THE HOLIEST OF ALL HOLY PLACES

The Color Guide to Rādhā Kuṇḍa: The Holiest of All Holy Places—By Rājaśekhara Dāsa Brahmacārī. The transcendental lake known as Rādhā Kuṇḍa is the most secret meeting place where Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa enjoy intimate pastimes of divine love. Hardbound, 175 pages, color photos, map, 7" x 9". **$19.95** RLBH462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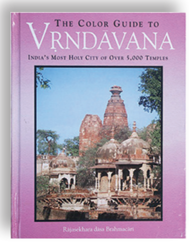
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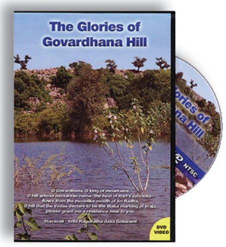
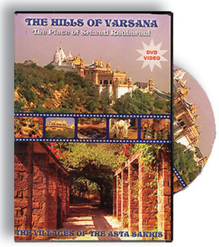
The Color Guide to Vṛndāvana: India's Most Holy City of Over 5,000 Temples—By Rājaśekhara Dāsa Brahmacārī. Covers more than 100 sacred places in Vrindavan. Hardbound, 150 pages, over 200 color pictures, map, 7" x 9". **$19.95** RLBH463


The Glories of
Govardhana Hill

The Glories of Govardhana Hill (DVD)—Narrated by Bhakti Caitanya Swami. Visit the most sacred mountain in the world, the crown jewel of Vraja. This visual tour explores the sacred sites, temples, and ponds where Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa, and the cowherd boys and girls spent their childhood. 83 minutes. **$17.95** BCVD436


THE HILLS OF VARSANA
The Place of Srimati Radharani
THE VILLAGES OF THE ASTA SAKHIS

Hills of Varshana (DVD)—Narrated by Bhakti Caitanya Swami. Take a journey through the sacred hills of Varshana. Visit the temples and see the places where Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa enjoyed Their youth 5,000 years ago. Tour the villages of Rādhā's eight *gopī* friends. 65 minutes. **$17.95** B8VD332

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The Capital of Nanda Maharaja

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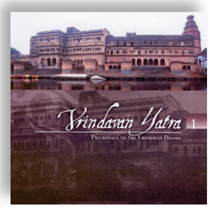
Sri Radhakunda

Sri Radhakunda (DVD)—Narrated by Bhakti Caitanya Swami. Visit the most holy of all holy places, Radhakunda. This tour includes the Aṣṭha Sakhī temple, the Rādhā-Mādhava temple, the Rādhākāntā temple, and many others. 64 minutes. **$17.95** BCVD454

Vraja Mandala
Parikrama

Vraja Mandala Parikrama (DVD Set)—Narrated by Bhakti Caitanya Swami. This visual tour takes you throughout the sacred land of Vraja, visiting the many temples, forests, and ponds in Vrindavan, Govardhan, Mathura, and many other places where Kṛṣṇa spent His childhood. This set follows the month-long Vraja Maṇḍala Parikramā held by ISKCON every year. Four discs, 280 total minutes. **$49.95** BCVD440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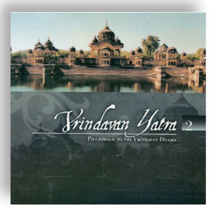
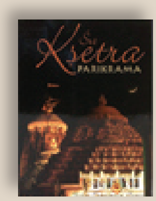

Vrindavan Yatra 2

Vrindavan Yatra, Vol. 2 (MP3 CD)—Visit Kṛṣṇa's childhood home and many sacred sites at Govardhana Hill where Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and Rādhārāṇī spent Their childhoods. Recorded live. (Recording quality varies.) 11 hours, 40 minutes of audio. **$11.95** KPCD802

A New Guide to Puri


Kṣetra
PARIKRAMA

Śrī Kṣetra Parikramā—By Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami. Śrī Kṣetra (Jagannātha Puri), with Lord Jagannātha's magnificent temple and the place where Lord Caitanya lived after taking *sannyāsa*, is sacred to devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Go on *parikramā* (walking pilgrimage) through the city, visiting the many sacred sites and temples, using scriptural references, local lore, and color photos.

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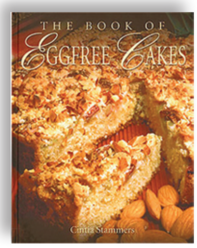
Cooking for Kṛṣṇa



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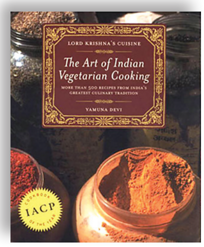

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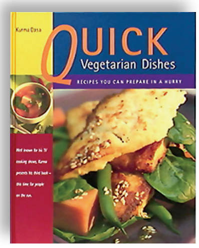

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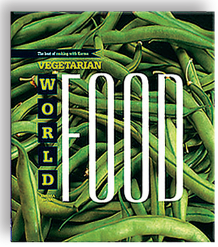

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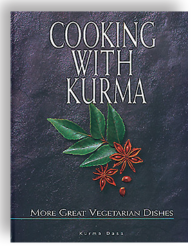

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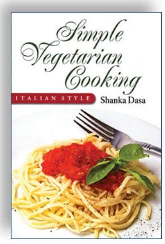

Simple Vegetarian Cooking, Italian Style—By Shanka Dasa. Revised and updated. This cookbook is especially meant for vegetarians who recognize that the food they eat is a gift from God (Kṛṣṇa) and naturally feel inclined to show their appreciation and gratitude. By using asafetida and ghee in place of garlic, Shanka Dasa creates many delicious Italian antipasti, soups, sauces, pastas, and other dishes. Softbound, 126 pages, 6" x 9". $8.95 VMBS606

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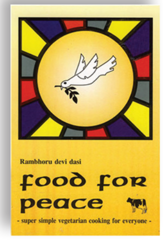

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VEDIC THOUGHTS

Human prosperity flourishes by natural gifts and not by gigantic industrial enterprises. The gigantic industrial enterprises are products of a godless civilization, and they cause the destruction of the noble aims of human life. The more we go on increasing such troublesome industries to squeeze out the vital energy of the human being, the more there will be unrest and dissatisfaction of the people in general, although a few only can live lavishly by exploitation.

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.8.40, Purport

Childish and foolish people are attached to materialistic, fruitive activities, although the actual goal of life is to become free from such activities. Therefore, the Vedic injunctions indirectly lead one to the path of ultimate liberation by first prescribing fruitive religious activities, just as a father promises his child candy so that the child will take his medicine.

Śrī Āvirhotra
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.3.44

Lord Kṛṣṇa alone is the supreme controller, and all others are His servants. They dance as He makes them do so.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 5.142

Simply by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa one can obtain freedom from material existence. Indeed, simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra one will be able to see the lotus feet of the Lord.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
(quoting His guru, Īśvara Purī)
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 7.73

Let me take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who has descended in the form of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach us real knowledge, His devotional service, and detachment from whatever does not foster Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He has descended because He is an ocean of transcendental mercy. Let me surrender unto His lotus feet.

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya
Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭaka 6.74

When spiritual knowledge is acquired through the process of negation (*neti-neti*), the Absolute Truth, which is transcendental to *māyā,* is realized only partially. The variegated aspect of transcendence that lies much deeper within is not realized. If one who follows this process meets a personalist, self-realized Vaiṣṇava guru, then only can he be protected from the *anartha* ["unwanted thing"] of impersonalism.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
Bhakti-tattva-viveka, Chapter 1

2010 FESTIVAL OF INDIA

Schedule for North America

IMPORTANT NOTE: Some of these dates are not yet confirmed. Before scheduling your travel, be sure to confirm the festival date with the ISKCON temple in the city where the festival is to be held. Or email Festival of India: madhuhadasa@gmail.com.

May 29–30
New Raman Reti (Alachua, Florida)
Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Installation

June 6
Jacksonville, Florida Rathayātrā

June 12
New York City Rathayātrā

June 18–20
Atlanta Pānihāṭi Ciḍadahi
Festival and Rathayātrā

July 4
Washington, D. C., Rathayātrā

July 11–12
Montreal Rathayātrā

July 17–18
Toronto Rathayātrā

July 24
Calgary Rathayātrā

August 1
Los Angeles Rathayātrā

August 8
San Francisco Rathayātrā

August 14–15
Vancouver Rathayātrā

August 21
Edmonton Rathayātrā

August 28
Nelson, B. C., Festival

September 1–2
Vancouver Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī
and Vyāsa Pūjā

September 4–5
Seattle Rathayātrā

September 9–12
Joshua Tree, California, BhaktiFest

September 18–19
Boston Rathayātrā

September 25
Philadelphia Rathayātrā

October 16
Washington, D. C., Śrī Rāma
Vijayotsava